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Second Committee

Summary record of the 1st meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 4 October 2018, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Skinner-Klée Arenales ..... (Guatemala)

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18-16514 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 5: Election of the officers of the Main Committees

1. **The Chair** said that the candidacy of Mr. Remaoun (Algeria) for the office of Vice-Chair had been endorsed by the African States.

2. *Mr. Remaoun (Algeria) was elected Vice-Chair by acclamation.*

Statement by the Chair

3. **The Chair** said that the list of items allocated to the Committee had been issued as document A/C.2/73/1, and informed the Committee how responsibility for the various agenda items would be divided among the members of the Bureau.

4. He drew attention to the guidance of the General Assembly regarding the work of the Main Committees set out in the report of the General Committee (A/73/250). Meetings would begin punctually at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. If there were few or no speakers inscribed for a particular meeting, the meeting would be cancelled or shortened so that conference services could reallocated. In view of the limited time available, it was important for the Committee to maximize the use of its time. Delegations were reminded that the General Assembly had decided to continue its practice of waiving the requirement that at least one quarter of Committee members should be present in order to declare a meeting open and permit the debate to proceed.

5. The list of speakers for both the Committee's general debate and the agenda items allocated to it was open. Delegations were requested to inscribe their names on the list as soon as possible to enable the Committee to plan its work more efficiently. If a delegation was not in the room when its turn came, it would automatically be moved to the end of the list, unless it had made arrangements to change places with another delegation.

6. Recalling that the General Assembly had decided to maintain the current time limits of seven minutes for individual Member States and 10 minutes for delegations speaking on behalf of a group of States during the general debate (five minutes and seven minutes, respectively, during debates on individual agenda items), he urged speakers to confine themselves to the salient points of their statements and to provide copies of their statements to the conference officers for purposes of electronic circulation through PaperSmart. Introductions of Secretariat reports should be limited to 10 minutes and representatives of the Secretariat and of agencies, funds and programmes should focus on selected issues of priority concern to them.

7. In accordance with previous decisions of the General Assembly and the Committee's established practice, explanations of vote would be limited to five minutes, delegations would be entitled to two rights of reply per agenda item, first of five and then of three minutes, and points of order would be limited to three minutes. He took it that the Committee wished to maintain those time limits.

8. *It was so decided.*

Organization of work (A/C.2/73/L.1)

9. **The Chair** invited the Committee to consider the draft programme of work as contained in document A/C.2/73/L.1. He drew attention to a number of drafting changes to the document and noted that a new sub-item, entitled "The role of the international community in the prevention of the radiation threat in Central Asia", had been added to the document. Recalling the guidelines adopted by the General Assembly in its decision 65/530 on improving the working methods of the Committee, he said that the Bureau would keep multiple mandatory deadlines for the submission of draft resolutions, to which the Committee would need to adhere strictly. Requests for extensions made prior to the expiration of a deadline would be considered on a case-by-case basis, bearing it in mind that the Secretariat required a minimum of 48 hours to process and issue documents in all languages before their scheduled consideration.

10. Pursuant to General Assembly decision 65/530, draft resolutions should be concise, focused and action-oriented. Preambular paragraphs should be kept to a minimum and, where possible, references to the sources of the relevant language should be provided. The appointment of facilitators for informal "informal" consultations was nearly complete and facilitators were urged to convene consultations as soon as possible; delegations were urged to do their utmost to conclude negotiations in time in order for action on draft resolutions to be taken on the scheduled dates.

11. In line with its practice at previous sessions, the Committee would hold a joint meeting with the Economic and Social Council on 10 October 2018, entitled "The circular economy in practice". The Bureau proposed the following two side events: "Infrastructure and sustainable development: Making infrastructure investments work for women and girls", to be held on 16 October 2018, and "Debt vulnerabilities in emerging markets and developing countries", to be held on 23 October 2018. Interpretation services for those side events would be provided on an "as available" basis.

12. The general debate starting on 8 October would be preceded by a keynote address by Mr. Homi Kharas, Interim Vice President and Director of the Global Economy and Development programme at the Brookings Institution.

13. The target date for the conclusion of the Committee's work was 29 November 2018, the last date that would allow time for the Committee's reports to be processed and issued in time for consideration by the General Assembly before its December recess. All draft resolutions with financial implications should be submitted to the Fifth Committee no later than 1 December.

14. He took it that the Committee wished to approve the organization of work as contained in document A/C.2/73/L.1, as orally revised.

15. *It was so decided.*

16. **The Chair** said that he took it that the Committee wished to take note of document A/C.2/73/L.1/Add.1/Rev.1, on the status of documentation.

17. *It was so decided.*

18. **The Chair** recalled that, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 72/313 on revitalization of the work of the General Assembly, each Main Committee was requested to make proposals for the further biennialization, triennialization, clustering and elimination of agenda items. The resolution also requested the President of the General Assembly, through consultations with all Member States, to identify proposals aimed at addressing gaps and duplication in the agenda as they related to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Each Main Committee was requested to discuss its working methods at the beginning of every session and, in his capacity as Chair of the Committee, he was invited to brief the Ad Hoc Working Group on the Revitalization of the Work of the General Assembly on best practices and lessons learned with a view to improving working methods.

The meeting rose at 10.45 a.m.

United Nations A/C.2/73/SR.2

General Assembly
Seventy-third session
Official Records

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Second Committee

Summary record of the 2nd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 8 October 2018, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Mr. Skinner-Klée Arenales ..... (Guatemala)

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18-16685 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Opening statement by the Chair

1. **The Chair** said that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — a plan of action for people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnerships — provided a guiding, universal and uncontested vision for the welfare of future generations. The high-level political forum on sustainable development, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council must continue to increase their support for its implementation.

2. During the current session, the Committee would work to ensure the successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda by engaging in dialogue and seeking to provide political guidance on many pressing sustainable development issues, such as the international financial system, external debt sustainability and development, and international trade and development. In so doing, it would also bear in mind the priorities of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and address matters related to the mainstreaming of the three dimensions of sustainable development, as underlined in the 2030 Agenda.

3. Despite substantial progress, poverty remained widespread in the least developed countries and a pervasive problem in most middle-income countries. The international community must therefore support countries, particularly those in special situations, in their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. In that context, special attention should be given to addressing productive capacity and infrastructure challenges in Africa and the least developed countries, where development potential was constrained by unfair trade practices.

4. Effective strategic direction and guidance on sustainable development at the global level depended on the respective agendas of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, their subsidiary bodies, the high-level political forum and other related forums all being aligned with the 2030 Agenda. The General Assembly had recently called for continued consultations on alignment with the 2030 Agenda, emphasizing that synergies among the agendas of the various bodies and forums should be enhanced, and that the Main Committees should continue to work with Member States to consolidate or eliminate agenda items where possible.

Statement by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs

5. **Mr. Liu** Zhenmin (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs) said that the clear focus of the Committee's work during the current session was to translate into reality the vision laid out in the 2030 Agenda. While the momentum remained strong for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, as evidenced by the number of countries presenting voluntary national reviews at the high-level political forum, progress remained too slow and uneven. However, the Committee could reflect on how to accelerate such progress through the various sectoral and other policy issues on its agenda.

6. The 2030 Agenda was being implemented in a changing global environment: on the one hand, global economic growth of at least 3 per cent was projected for the next few years; on the other, escalating global trade tensions and prolonged uncertainty in global trade could have severe consequences for businesses, consumer confidence, asset prices and investment behaviour, leading to a sharp slowdown in economic activity. At the same time, spiralling protectionist and retaliatory measures threatened to set back the multilateral trading system and multilateralism more broadly.

7. Financial vulnerabilities had also been increasing in many developing countries, exposing them to exchange rate pressures, greater financial volatility and sudden capital withdrawal. Countries experiencing fragile gross domestic product growth, elevated political uncertainty or large current account or fiscal deficits had become more susceptible to financial volatility and were at greater risk of contagion from external shocks.

8. The undercurrent of geopolitical tensions had the potential to severely disrupt economic activity in a number of countries. Meanwhile, the threat from climate change continued to loom large, especially in vulnerable small island developing States. In the face of such increasing risks, it was more imperative than ever for policymakers to build resilience by investing in inclusive and sustainable development and exploring interlinked solutions, particularly to address the related problems of poverty, hunger and conflict.

9. The achievement of the Sustainable Goals would require financial stability and sustainability, as highlighted in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. In that context, the Secretary-General had recently launched his strategy for financing the 2030 Agenda, which laid out the actions that the United Nations would need to take to accelerate resource mobilization for the Goals. The strategy also related to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/243 on the repositioning of the

United Nations development system, a process in which the engagement of Member States would be crucial. The operational activities segment of the Economic and Social Council would provide an important forum to receive further guidance from Member States in early 2019. The Committee would also be briefed on the system-wide plan of action for the Third United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (2018–2027).

10. The Committee would shortly be reflecting on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, which contained an agreement to repurpose the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development as the International Migration Review Forum. For its part, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs was fully committed to supporting the development of such a Review Forum.

11. The Committee would also need to consider the technological revolution that was transforming lives and shaping the future. The collective ambition of achieving the 2030 Agenda now critically hinged on harnessing new frontier technologies for the collective good.

12. In the context of the high-level political forum, which would be convened both under the auspices of the Economic and Social Council in July 2019 and under the auspices of the General Assembly in September 2019, Heads of State and Government would review progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and discuss actions for accelerating the implementation of 2030 Agenda. Deliberations by the Committee would certainly help to build consensus on some of the key issues that would be addressed at the next cycle of the high-level political forum.

Keynote address by Mr. Kharas, Interim Vice-President and Director of the Global Economy and Development Programme at the Brookings Institution

13. **Mr. Kharas** (Interim Vice-President and Director of the Global Economy and Development Programme at the Brookings Institution), accompanying his remarks with a digital slide presentation, said that he wished to share his findings on the progress made towards the achievement of 21 of the 169 Sustainable Development Goal targets in the 2030 Agenda. Those particular targets had been selected because they were the only ones that were people-centred, quantified and therefore measurable.

14. The overall purpose of the study undertaken within that framework had been to determine where the most and least progress was being made, disaggregated by target and by country, and to illustrate anticipated shortfalls in the achievement of the targets based on current trajectories. The 21 targets selected had been divided into two categories: targets for which the stakes were clearly life and death, or "lives at stake" targets, and targets that involved people having their basic needs met, or "needs at stake" targets.

15. In the first category, which included such targets as ending preventable deaths of newborns and children under 5 years of age (target 3.2) and reducing by one third premature mortality from non-communicable diseases (target 3.4), it was found that just over 40 million lives would be lost if current trajectories towards achievement persisted, including 9 million children.

16. In the second category, which included targets related to air pollution, gender equality and sanitation, the number of people projected to be left behind, given current trajectories, ranged from the billions to the hundreds of millions, depending on the target. Progress towards sanitation-related targets was inadequate, with an estimated 2 billion people projected to still lack basic sanitation by 2030. Furthermore, as the targets on air pollution no longer reflected the latest levels of particulates considered safe to breathe, negative progress was being made towards their achievement. Regression was also observed on targets related to childhood obesity.

17. At the country level, the people to be left behind, should current trajectories hold, would be concentrated in a few countries that comprised the bulk of the global population, including China, India and Nigeria. Thus, if global totals were to be improved, greater focus should be placed on those countries. Even in large advanced economies such as the United States of America, the outlook was poor for achieving certain targets, including those related to childhood obesity and gender equality.

18. Progress was ongoing in every country, but it was too slow. While poor countries were still the furthest behind, the same patterns of inadequate progress could be observed in Member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Given current trajectories, by 2030 at least half of the distance to the Sustainable Development Goals would remain to be covered for 16 of the 21 targets examined.

19. While there was still room for optimism in the light of the progress made to date, full achievement of the Goals would require significant and sustained acceleration of implementation efforts in every country, with a particular emphasis on large countries.

20. **Mr. Rosenthal** (Former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Guatemala), lead discussant, welcomed the fact that the keynote speaker had used the 2030 Agenda

as a framework to motivate improved development outcomes for all and said that the methodology employed for measuring the distance to achieving the Goals was a useful complement to the global indicator framework adopted through General Assembly resolution 71/313.

21. The potential acceleration of past trends, though contingent upon appropriate international and national policies, provided a basis for optimism. However, there was cause for concern in a cluster of mostly sub-Saharan African countries where violent conflict had erupted in the recent past and was liable to continue. In those countries, deceleration or retrogression of past trends was, sadly, plausible.

22. In closing, he first asked the keynote speaker how progress might be tracked for Goals that were not easily susceptible to quantification, such as Goal 16, which sought to promote peace, justice and strong institutions. Second, given the scepticism and hostility of certain Member States towards multilateralism and the considerable erosion of the international order under which the 2030 Agenda had been adopted, he wondered how the current political environment might affect the achievement of the Goals.

23. **Mr. Bolaji** (Nigeria) expressed a desire for more concrete advice on how to accelerate cooperation and assistance in the face of the diverse and persistent challenges facing countries, particularly at the local level.

24. **Mr. Babajide** (Observer for the European Union) said that leaving no one behind was at the heart of development cooperation policy in the European Union. More needed to be done to improve the scope and coverage of data collection and analysis, including by building capacities in partner countries. The European Union would continue to support the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century and OECD in that regard.

25. International development cooperation efforts must be built around the national plans and priorities of partner countries. A reformed United Nations development system that included a strengthened resident coordinator system should help to achieve that aim. The European Union, for its part, would continue to do all it could to focus its development cooperation efforts on the most excluded partners and to improve the way that it monitored and reviewed progress.

26. **Mr. Kharas** (Interim Vice-President and Director of the Global Economy and Development Programme at the Brookings Institution) said that tracking progress towards the Goals that were not easily measurable would require more nuanced and timely data. Unfortunately, many of the countries of greatest concern had the least developed statistical capabilities and therefore the least data. Capacity-building efforts should therefore be focused in those areas. Because statistics published by Governments tended to be too out of date to be useful for effective policymaking, researchers were increasingly turning to alternative sources of data. However, those data should ideally be used as a complement to official survey data, and nowhere was that of greater importance than at the subnational level.

27. The research presented in his keynote address had been intended only to document the size and nature of the challenges at hand. Identifying concrete steps to accelerate development progress was best addressed at the country level, where the understanding of specific national needs was most acute, and that was already under way in the form of voluntary national reviews. Implementation, on the other hand, was an area that required international resources and favourable global conditions above and beyond changes in national policy.

28. The world had indeed changed since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, but much of that change had been positive. For example, fears that artificial intelligence would lead to significant displacement in the labour market had largely been debunked, although that might yet come to pass in the medium to long term. Consensus had been building to the effect that diversified and resilient economies were essential to the inclusivity required to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. Sustainable growth had begun to take hold, as evidenced by the inclusion of sustainability in the medium-term strategies of many corporations. However, more investment was needed in research and development, data collection and implementation at the local and national levels in order to generate the technological innovation upon which accelerated progress would depend.

General debate

29. **Mr. Edrees** (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that poverty eradication in all its forms and dimensions was the greatest global challenge and a prerequisite for sustainable development. Successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda was therefore of paramount importance. The scale and level of ambition of the 2030 Agenda required strengthening the means of implementation, creating an enabling global environment for development and maintaining such fundamental principles as leaving no one behind and ensuring common but differentiated responsibilities.

30. For sustainable economic growth to positively contribute to poverty eradication, macroeconomic policies must focus on job creation and on economic and social inclusion. Young people had vast potential to contribute to development and social cohesion. In order to generate sustainable employment opportunities for them, it was necessary to expand productive capacities, industrialization and infrastructure development, and thus ensure sufficient labour-intensive economic growth. The economic empowerment of women also lay at the heart of efforts to achieve sustainable development.

31. Official development assistance (ODA) would continue to be an important means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda. At the same time, it was essential to assist countries in attaining long-term debt sustainability and to promote international trade as an important source to finance development and achieve inclusive economic growth as well as poverty eradication. The Group therefore reaffirmed the significance of a universal, rules-based, open, transparent, predictable, inclusive, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system under the World Trade Organization. It also regarded the transfer of technology from developed to developing countries on favourable terms as vital for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

32. Welcoming the upcoming twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Katowice, Poland, in December 2018, the Group stressed the importance of ensuring that its outcome was fully operationalized and reflected not only the delicate balance of the Paris Agreement, including on issues related to adaptation, mitigation and means of implementation, but also the urgent need to scale up the level of ambition as informed by science.

33. Similarly, urgent and significant actions would be needed to reduce the degradation of natural habitats, halt the loss of biodiversity and protect and prevent the extinction of threatened species. In that context, the Group also welcomed the convening of the fourteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity, to be held in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt in November 2018.

34. As a complement to, not a substitute for, North-South cooperation, South-South cooperation should continue to be guided by the principles of respect for solidarity, national sovereignty, national ownership and independence, equality, non-conditionality, non-interference in domestic affairs and mutual benefit. Furthermore, States should refrain from promulgating and applying any unilateral economic, financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations. Such measures hindered development finance and prevented the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries.

35. In order to leave no one behind, the diverse needs and challenges faced by countries in specific situations must be addressed. Multilateralism offered all countries an important opportunity to address complex challenges through collective action. In that spirit, the Group particularly wished to reaffirm the important tradition of adopting draft resolutions in the Committee by consensus.

36. **Mr. Locsin, Jr.** (Philippines), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that the Association remained committed to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals and the underlying principle of leaving no one behind. In that context, it had taken concrete steps to build resilience, promote innovation and develop regional smart cities, including the promotion of complementarities between the ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and the 2030 Agenda. In particular, the incoming Chair of ASEAN had proposed the establishment of an ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue in Bangkok in 2019 to promote sustainable development research, build relevant capacities and serve as a platform for policy dialogue between ASEAN and its external partners, including the United Nations.

37. Substantial progress had been achieved following the implementation of the Strategic Plan of Action on ASEAN Cooperation in Food, Agriculture and Forestry for the period 2016–2025, which sought to enhance trade facilitation and ensure food security, food safety, better nutrition and equitable distribution; the ASEAN Work Plan on Education (2016–2020), which aspired to provide inclusive educational opportunities for all ASEAN citizens; and the ASEAN Post-2015 Health Development Agenda, which focused on promoting healthy lifestyles and access to health care, enhancing food safety and responding to hazards and emerging threats. With regard to the latter, the ASEAN-United Nations Joint Strategic Plan of Action on Disaster Management constituted an important step towards greater coherence in United Nations engagement with ASEAN on disaster risk reduction and management.

38. Other recent achievements by ASEAN included strengthened cooperation to promote sustainable development, including through the development of the circular economy, the use of renewable energy, the

reduction of waste and the conservation of biodiversity. ASEAN was in the process of finalizing its strategic plan on the environment, which would serve as a guiding document for cooperation in that area. The Special ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Climate Action had been convened on 10 July 2018 for the full and effective implementation of the Paris Agreement.

39. **Ms. Zahir** (Maldives), speaking on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States, said that the Committee's work was crucial for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (Samoa Pathway). The Committee also served as an important platform for coordinating collective action to address sustainable development issues.

40. The preparatory process was already under way for the midterm review of the Samoa Pathway on 27 September 2019. All States should participate in that process in order to track the progress made towards achieving sustainable development, share best practices and identify areas that still required attention in the face of growing global challenges. Small island developing States had themselves held three regional preparatory meetings, in Mauritius, Belize and Tonga, and would shortly hold their interregional meeting in Samoa to make the necessary substantive preparations for the midterm review. Development partners should also actively participate in that review and reaffirm their commitments to accelerate the implementation of the Samoa Pathway and provide resources to the voluntary trust fund.

41. Small island developing States needed increased support, including assistance with capacity-building, technology transfer and access to finance, to achieve the goals set out in the internationally agreed development frameworks, particularly the 2030 Agenda. The United Nations could assume a greater leadership role in fostering such support.

42. The reports of the Secretary-General focused on small island developing States, particularly the assessment resulting from the evolving mandates of the small island developing States units of the Secretariat (A/73/345), clearly indicated the limitations of the Secretariat units to perform their obligations. Hence the need to provide those units with more predictable and sufficient funds to allow them to fulfil their evolving mandates.

43. Climate change continued to pose the biggest challenge to the sustainable development and economic growth of small island developing States. The political will and determination of those States to fulfil the purpose of the Paris Agreement had been demonstrated by their ambitious commitments submitted thereunder. They recognized the value of the facilitative dialogue held in 2018 and, in preparation for the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, urged all countries to accelerate efforts to agree on the work programme under the Paris Agreement. Progress must be made across all the items on the agenda, including interlinked elements, to ensure full operationalization of the Paris Agreement. At the same time, the means of implementation remained the most critical aspect for a favourable outcome.

44. **Mr. Carazo Zeledón** (Costa Rica), speaking on behalf of the Like-minded Group of Supporters of Middle-Income Countries, said that middle-income countries continued to face significant and specific development challenges. Many countries that had recently graduated to middle-income status or would shortly do so, for example, were concerned that a graduation process based on per capita income would not allow them to maintain their access to concessional financing from intergovernmental organizations. The Group therefore encouraged multilateral development banks and international financial institutions to include multidimensional eligibility criteria in their financial policies.

45. The Group stressed the need to increase access to financial resources in support of the sustainable development efforts of middle-income countries and called on ODA providers to fulfil their respective commitments to developing and least developed countries. While welcoming South-South cooperation as an important complement to, not a substitute for, North-South cooperation, the Group also encouraged the promotion of triangular cooperation and supported continued efforts to improve the quality, effectiveness and impact of development cooperation.

46. The United Nations should elaborate a comprehensive system-wide and long-term strategy to facilitate sustainable development cooperation with, and coordinated support for, middle-income countries. Furthermore, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and other relevant organizations should jointly establish a road map to address the most pressing sustainable development needs of middle-income countries, including their achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and other internationally agreed goals. For the United Nations to respond adequately to the demands of 2030 Agenda, there was an urgent need to develop transparent metrics beyond per capita income.

47. The Group looked forward to the implementation of General Assembly resolution 72/230, entitled "Development cooperation with middle-income countries", in particular the convening of a high-level meeting of the General Assembly on 4 December 2018 to discuss the gaps and challenges of middle-income countries in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

48. **Mr. Ligoya** (Malawi), speaking on behalf of the Group of Least Developed Countries, said that the world was facing overwhelming challenges. Crises such as climate change, natural disasters, pandemics, unprecedented human mobility and displacements were further compounding the structural challenges that the 47 most vulnerable countries of the world had been facing. While globalization had deeply taken root, as its benefits were not yet shared equitably the least developed countries had not been able to fully reap its rewards. There was also a risk that the benefits of frontier technologies would be inequitably distributed: artificial intelligence divides might reinforce the digital divides that were already fuelling economic inequality and undermining competitiveness.

49. At their current rate of economic growth, the least developed countries were unlikely to eradicate extreme poverty by 2030. Furthermore, 33 least developed countries with a combined population of 82 million required urgent food assistance and long-term investment to ensure their food and nutrition security. Debt relief would also be vitally important for least developed countries, as would duty-free, quota-free market access, simplified rules of origin and an increased share of aid for trade.

50. While the least developed countries had made progress in some areas, including access to electricity, school enrolment rates and women's participation in elected office, the results achieved to date remained insufficient to catch up with other developing countries. The Group therefore welcomed the establishment of the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries and the 4 per cent increase, in real terms, in bilateral aid from the countries belonging to the OECD Development Assistance Committee. Nevertheless, the share of ODA remained at 0.09 per cent of the donors' gross national income and only 6 countries had reached the lower threshold of the ODA targets for least developed countries. Development partners therefore needed to fulfil and go beyond their ODA commitment of 0.15–0.20 per cent of gross national income. The quality of ODA, including with respect to predictability and alignment with countries' priorities, also needed to increase.

51. In order to address those challenges and accelerate progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in the least developed countries, the Committee needed to take a fresh look during the current session at the support available to and required by those countries.

52. **Mr. Webson** (Antigua and Barbuda), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that the Committee's work should focus on ensuring the successful implementation of all the international agreements within its purview. Sustainable development remained central to such work and the unique challenges faced by small island developing States must continue to be addressed in that context, particularly the dire threat of climate change; the Samoa Pathway remained the current point of reference for shaping such discussions. The Committee should provide full and pragmatic support for the implementation of the Samoa Pathway, its annual review within the framework of the high-level political forum on sustainable development and its midterm review in 2019.

53. The path to sustainable development must be based on the equality of nations and mutual respect for all, regardless of a country's stage of development. While there was strong evidence that the global economy had improved tremendously, the growth in the global economy was uneven. That was particularly true for countries within the CARICOM subregion, where improvements in the economy were still inadequate to address the problem of unemployment, particularly amongst youth, and the challenge of debt sustainability.

54. The phenomenon of de-risking, which had disrupted traditional correspondent banking relations, was one of the major challenges facing the Caribbean region. Correspondent banking was a global public good that must be available to all countries, large and small. The unilateral withdrawal of those relations threatened to separate CARICOM countries from the global trading system, weaken their economies and increase the level of poverty. The Committee should therefore find creative ways to discuss the harmful practice of de-risking under the agenda item on macroeconomic policy questions.

55. Many CARICOM members had lost access to concessionary financing following their graduation to middle-income status. As a result, they had been forced to take on significant debt to finance their resilience measures as vulnerable small islands. The international community should therefore reconsider the metrics for determining access to financing, including by means of a vulnerability index. CARICOM would continue to advocate for a review of the criteria for determining the

access of middle-income countries to concessionary financing, particularly given their heterogeneity.

56. CARICOM welcomed the decision by the President of the General Assembly to postpone the high-level meeting on middle income countries that was to take place during the current year's high-level debate and fully supported the need for a more elevated high-level meeting in the coming months, to which the Committee could contribute.

57. Member States should allocate additional resources to the units focused on small island developing States of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States. Increased funding to both would allow for the effective implementation of their additional mandates, which included the Samoa Pathway and the 2030 Agenda.

58. **Mr. Hilale** (Morocco), speaking on behalf of the Group of African States, said that the Committee should continue to focus on providing coordinated and integrated guidance on micro and macroeconomic policies relating to poverty eradication, environmental sustainability, international trade and development, the 2030 Agenda and its related targets.

59. The successful and harmonized implementation of Agenda 2063 of the African Union, the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda would largely depend on strengthening institutional and human capacities at various levels. Sustainable development was a collective opportunity and responsibility that could be achieved through multilateral cooperation, the honouring of international commitments, including the scaling up of cooperation to curb illicit financial flows, and the provision of means of implementation support to developing countries. To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, all action areas of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda should be fully implemented. In that regard, addressing the implementation gaps of the Addis Agenda by mobilizing all types of resources from all sources was indispensable. That required a revitalized global partnership and solidarity as well as enhanced multi-stakeholder collaboration.

60. It was regrettable that reactionary tendencies had continued to cause a global decline in ODA. Adequate and predictable financing was indispensable to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and ensure that no one was left behind. African countries needed technical assistance and financing to strengthen their national capacities and help to grow their economies. ODA providers should therefore uphold their previous commitments and the international community should explore how to achieve a meaningful balance between debt sustainability and financing of the Sustainable Development Goals.

61. As one of the main means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda, international trade must remain a priority. The African Group was firmly committed to a rules-based, transparent, non-discriminatory, open and inclusive multilateral trading system and was deeply concerned that the Doha Development Agenda had not been concluded.

62. Repositioning of the United Nations development system, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 71/243, was a prerequisite for the success of the 2030 Agenda. A reformed development system must incorporate regional agendas and priorities for development in the collective quest to secure the future of sustainable prosperity and opportunity, leaving no one behind. In that regard, operational activities for development must take into account the need to build, promote and strengthen the capacity of African countries in their efforts to address long-term sustainable development at the national level. At the same time, eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions should remain the highest priority and overarching objective of the reform efforts. The United Nations development system should continue to support the 2063 Agenda and the New Partnership for Africa's Development, and United Nations entities should fully mainstream both instruments into their operational activities for development. Predictable funding must also be provided to enhance the development system's coordination with humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding efforts.

63. The Group called for an effective and progressive international response to the threat that climate change posed to agriculture and food security. In that context, it was important to intensify discussions on combating desertification, restoring degraded land and soil, and recharging receding rivers, especially on the African continent which was disproportionately affected by those phenomena.

64. **Ms. Bird** (Australia), speaking also on behalf of Canada and New Zealand, said that the three delegations she represented had developed a reputation in the Committee for demanding effective and efficient working methods that supported consensus outcomes, work-life balance, collegiality and the completion of sessions within set timeframes. They were proud of that reputation and were committed to supporting the Chair and facilitators in order to achieve those outcomes at the current session.

65. Their respective delegations would appreciate early warning of resolutions with possible budgetary implications and urged all States to allow sufficient time to consult, discuss and debate draft resolutions by ensuring that they were submitted within set deadlines. That approach would maximize the opportunity to reach consensus on the important issues before the Committee. As agreed in General Assembly resolution 72/313, the Committee should seek to minimize overlap in its agenda, and consider the further biennialization, triennialization, clustering and elimination of items on the agenda. The Committee should also avoid engaging in polemics on recent leader-level agreements or adding superfluous elements to procedural processes.

66. The Committee should promote increased gender equality, not only in the content of its resolutions, but also in its working methods. Promoting gender equality was principled because women and girls deserve equal treatment and outcomes to men and boys, and stigma and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity debilitated development efforts. Gender equality was also pragmatic: it was perhaps the single most effective way to address poverty and inequality. To achieve global gender equality, the United Nations must lead by example.

67. Achieving the vision of the 2030 Agenda relied on some key foundations. First, the international community must redouble its commitment to leave no one behind. That included proactively seeking opportunities to identify and address the barriers to development faced by indigenous people, youth and minority groups, and promoting their enhanced participation in the United Nations system. Second, a strong awareness was required of the unique needs of least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and countries in special situations. The current year was particularly significant for small island developing States, given the forthcoming midterm review of the Samoa Pathway, and the challenges and needs of small island developing States must be at the forefront of the Committee's considerations.

68. Climate change represented the greatest global challenge; it could only be combated by acting in concert and with shared purpose. Canada, Australia and New Zealand therefore reaffirmed their commitment to the Paris Agreement.

69. Recognizing that disability-inclusive development cooperation was integral to aid effectiveness, their delegations were committed to ensuring that the Committee's achievements benefited the roughly 1 billion persons globally with disabilities. Furthermore, in line with the principle "nothing about us without us", they supported an active and central role for persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals, particularly in tackling the causes of poverty, exclusion and inequality.

70. Lastly, while acknowledging the need to overhaul global finance practices and mobilize partnerships across the international community at all levels, they shared a commitment to a progressive trade agenda that promoted meaningful trade liberalization and ensured that the benefits of trade were enjoyed broadly across all societies.

71. **Mr. Arriola Ramírez** (Paraguay), speaking on behalf of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, said that those countries faced immense geographical challenges which constrained their international competitiveness and overall socioeconomic progress. They faced high trade and transport costs and other challenges linked to inadequate infrastructure, inefficiencies at border crossings and bottlenecks related to customs procedures. As their export diversification and competitiveness remained limited and their productive capacities insufficient, landlocked developing countries were highly vulnerable to external shocks.

72. International trade was recognized as an engine for inclusive economic growth and poverty reduction, and an important means to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The Group was therefore greatly concerned that the participation of landlocked developing countries in international trade remained negligible, at less than 1 per cent of global merchandise trade in 2017. That situation resulted in narrow production and export bases, leading to limited economic growth and persistent poverty.

73. Information and communications technology played an increasingly important role in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. However, landlocked developing countries continued to face excessive costs for broadband, which hampered opportunities to leverage e-commerce, smart transportation systems and emerging technologies for sustainable development.

74. Landlocked developing countries continued to employ policies that would enhance domestic resource mobilization, including strengthening revenue collection and related accountability mechanisms. However, their efforts were being undermined by trade imbalances, volatile commodity prices and an underdeveloped private sector, among other factors. Addressing those challenges would be crucial.

75. Landlocked developing countries were disproportionately affected by climate change and its adverse impacts, including land degradation, desertification, deforestation, floods and droughts, owing to their structural vulnerabilities and limited productive capacities. As most landlocked developing countries were largely dependent on a few primary agricultural or mineral commodities, their adaptation and mitigation efforts would require additional support, including through existing financing mechanisms such as the Adaptation Fund, the Global Environmental Facility Trust Fund and the Green Climate Fund.

76. The substantive preparations for the midterm review of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024 would take place during the current session of the General Assembly. Innovative and sustainable solutions would need to be found to accelerate the implementation of both the Vienna Programme of Action and the 2030 Agenda by landlocked developing countries.

77. **Mr. Jaime Calderón** (El Salvador), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), said that the 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets were the basis for meeting regional and global challenges and represented a confirmation of the pledge to leave no one behind. However, that outcome would require the mobilization of appropriate financial and non-financial resources. Against that backdrop, the resolutions to be negotiated by the Committee must provide political guidance and address sustainable development from the perspective of the challenges faced by developing countries. The common objective should be to bring added value to the overall implementation and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, in order to achieve the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions.

78. CELAC was concerned that access to concessional finance from international financial institutions was reduced as per capita income increased, resulting in countries not being able to access sufficient affordable financing from other sources to meet their needs. It continued to be committed to promoting criteria that used multidimensional indicators for the accurate measurement of the complex and diverse realities of development in the region, and encouraged shareholders in multilateral development banks and donors to develop graduation policies that were sequenced, phased and gradual.

79. CELAC supported South-South cooperation as a complement to, not a substitute for, North-South and triangular cooperation and recognized that the success of the 2030 Agenda would depend on addressing the rights of youth, women and girls, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, older persons, migrants, refugees and other groups. Similarly, gender equity and equality and the advancement of women were prerequisites for the enjoyment of fundamental freedoms and human rights, the eradication of all forms of violence against women, adolescents and girls, and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

80. International cooperation must take into account the different development stages, priorities, circumstances and capabilities of developing countries, including the fact that all States had full and permanent sovereignty over all their wealth, natural resources and economic activities. An enabling international environment to support national efforts was the best way to achieve the overarching international goal of poverty eradication in an irreversible way. In that context, CELAC rejected the unilateral application of economic, financial or commercial measures incompatible with international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

81. Lastly, in the area of climate change, CELAC recognized the importance of strengthening the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 and reaching agreement on a robust outcome for the work programme under the Paris Agreement.

82. **Mr. Vale de Almeida** (Observer for the European Union), speaking also on behalf of the candidate countries Albania, Serbia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia; the stabilization and association process country Bosnia and Herzegovina; and, in addition, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine, said that by reaching agreement on the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement, the international community had adopted the most ambitious sustainable development agenda ever. That agenda should guide policy and action in countries at all stages of their development and should also steer the Committee in its work.

83. The European Union attached great importance to the Committee living up to its full potential and regretted the fact that discussions on its revitalization had thus far not made more progress. While the steps already taken to improve the Committee's work were welcome, much more needed to be done to improve its efficient functioning. In particular, the European Union would continue to insist on the need to ensure respect for the deadlines set by the Bureau, and for rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly. Furthermore, the European Union would support measures that allocated more time for discussions on the

preparation and negotiation of resolutions. Where the late submission of a draft resolution did not allow sufficient time for consultations to be held in order to achieve consensus on a meaningful resolution, the draft resolution in question should be referred to the next session.

84. The Sustainable Development Goals were an extraordinary opportunity to prioritize efforts beneficial to the planet and its people. In June 2017, as part of its response to the 2030 Agenda, the European Union had adopted a shared vision for development policy that also took into account the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement: the new European Consensus on Development. At the same time, the European Union was working to ensure that its existing and new policies were in line with the Sustainable Development Goals and their targets.

85. As climate change was one of the most pressing global challenges, there was a need to reaffirm joint commitments to the full implementation of the Paris Agreement and to place an emphasis on protecting the environment from further degradation.

86. To achieve the collective vision of a sustainable future, it should be borne in mind that the rule of law and development were strongly interrelated and mutually reinforcing. The advancement of the rule of law was essential for sustained and inclusive economic growth and sustainable development, the eradication of poverty and the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.

United Nations A/C.2/73/SR.3

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Second Committee

Summary record of the 3rd meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 8 October 2018, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Mr. Skinner-Klée Arenales ..... (Guatemala)

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General debate (*continued*)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

General debate (*continued*)

1. **Ms. Deiye** (Nauru), speaking on behalf of the Pacific small island developing States, said that the impact of climate change, including rising sea levels, posed a growing security challenge to which the United Nations must adapt and respond promptly, including through the appointment of a special representative of the Secretary-General on climate and security. The frequency and intensity of extreme weather events and natural disasters continued to worsen and the survival of Pacific small island developing States was under threat. In recent years, a staggering number of lives had been lost and communities continued to suffer the consequences of those disasters. In the Pacific region, modern approaches to enhancing food security and resilience to natural disasters should be complemented by local, traditional knowledge and practices. The integrated conservation of cultural and natural heritage could contribute to sustainable development and social cohesion.

2. The unique vulnerability of small island developing States must be addressed in the context of equitable and inclusive growth. In the run-up to the high-level review of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (Samoa Pathway), there was a need to re-examine the eligibility criteria for access to financing for development and technical assistance. Classification according to income often excluded small island developing States from preferential treatment. Reports by the Secretary-General on reviewing United Nations system support for small island developing States could serve as a guide for reform.

3. Financing for development was another urgent priority. Without actionable streams of financing, the goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development would remain empty promises. International cooperation and genuine and durable partnerships were essential for sustainable development, particularly for small island developing States, where capacity to mobilize additional domestic resources was limited. They especially needed capacity-building support in the areas of data collection, statistical analysis and research.

4. Kiribati, the Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu were among the least developed countries that especially required assistance from development partners to enhance their prospects for graduation, help them to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and fulfil the objectives of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020 (Istanbul Programme of Action).

5. The Pacific small island developing States stood by their commitment to sustaining the health, productivity and resilience of the Pacific Ocean. The undertakings made at the United Nations conference on the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 provided a critical benchmark for sustainable development. The health of the oceans was tightly linked to the other goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda.

6. **Mr. Al Shuaibi** (Oman) said that the 2030 Agenda, the aim of which was to underpin global security and stability, was a beacon of hope for peoples throughout the world. Innovative approaches and enhanced international cooperation, including capacity-building for developing countries and the transfer of advanced technology, were required to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. For its part, Oman would present its national voluntary review at the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2019. The review would highlight how his country was adapting its national development plans to the goals of the 2030 Agenda.

7. His Government attached the utmost importance to preserving the environment. It was working to ensure that national legislation was in line with international laws and norms on the matter and to optimize methods for mining raw materials. International trade was a key to development. The World Trade Organization (WTO) played an important role in leading the multilateral trade system and creating an international economic environment conducive to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

8. **Mr. Premchandran** (India) said that his country was one of more than 110 Member States to have submitted a national voluntary review in the previous three years and that it was on course to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. It supported the Secretary-General's reform proposals for the United Nations development system. In that context, traditional donors should increase their voluntary contributions to accelerate the process of breathing new life into the resident coordinator system.

9. Policy priority areas in India included poverty eradication, health care, education, gender matters, skills and employment and the development of infrastructure. His Government had launched the Clean India Mission, the world's largest sanitation and hygiene programme, to eradicate open defecation by 2019. The proportion of the population defecating in the open in India was now 20 per cent, a drop from 60 per cent four years previously. The Secretary-General had

recently acknowledged the efforts made by the Government of India to provide its people with sanitary facilities.

10. His Government planned to produce 175 GW of renewable energy, 100 GW of it using solar power, by 2022. Led by India and France, the International Solar Alliance had 70 member States and would make a tangible contribution to global climate action efforts. Th Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, had recently received a United Nations Champions of the Earth award for his leadership role in environment initiatives, including the pledge to eliminate all single-use plastics in India by 2022. Cochin International Airport in the State of Kerala, which was fully solar-powered, had also been recognized by the United Nations Environment Programme with a Champions of the Earth award. As a result of its reliance on solar power, carbon dioxide emissions would be reduced by more than 900,000 tons in the coming 25 years, the equivalent of planting 9 million trees, and financial savings of $6 million per year would be made.

11. India was involved in the preparatory process for the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, which would further underline the link between international migration and sustainable development. His Government looked forward to the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, which would be held in 2019. In that context, it had established the India-UN Development Partnership Fund in 2017 and had committed $150 million to finance development projects in least developed countries and small island developing States in the coming decade. India had contributed to the Trust Fund for International Cooperation in Tax Matters for the second year running. It had also contributed to trust funds for the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries and to the organization of the mid-term review of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024.

12. **Mr. Muenda** (South Africa) said that the work of the Second Committee should be focused on implementing the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The achievement of the goals contained therein could contribute greatly to reducing global economic inequality. Multilateralism was fundamental for tackling climate change, which most affected the poorest and most vulnerable, and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

13. Developed countries should cooperate with their developing counterparts and thereby help to combat unemployment and poverty. South-South and triangular cooperation and private-sector investment could not be a substitute for North-South cooperation. Efforts must be made to conclude the Doha Development Round and agree on legally binding outcomes that would allow developing countries to engage effectively in equitable global trade.

14. The establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area could lead to unprecedented economic development and encourage industrialization on the continent. A projected population of 1.7 billion people and nearly $7 trillion in cumulative consumer and business spending by 2030 made the goal of a creating a single market viable. Alongside trade, however, there was also a need to combat the flow of illicit finance, build institutions, promote technology transfer and work with national statistics offices to improve data quality. The latter was especially important for measuring progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Moreover, the issue of intellectual property rights should not become a barrier precluding developing countries from benefiting from the fourth industrial revolution. Failure in that regard would serve only to perpetuate inequality and exclusion, especially among women, persons with disabilities and rural communities.

15. **Mr. Mahmadaminov** (Tajikistan) said that the pace of implementation of the 2030 Agenda fell well short of expectations. The developed countries should support the process, including through official development assistance (ODA), technology transfer, financing for development and capacity-building. In particular, countries in Africa, least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States needed assistance.

16. Climate change was having a significant and growing impact on Central Asia. In Tajikistan alone, natural disasters causing floods, avalanches and landslides had claimed the lives of 200 people and resulted in severe economic damage estimated at $600 million in the previous five to six years. In response, his Government had adopted a national action plan to mitigate the effects of climate change and was working on a related strategy. To date, it had submitted three national reports in accordance with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Developing countries needed financial assistance and technology transfer to address the effects of climate change.

17. Sustainable Development Goal 6 and other water-related Goals were a priority for Tajikistan. The Dushanbe process, launched by his Government, would serve as a forum for promoting action, dialogue and policies in the context of General Assembly resolution 71/222 on the International Decade for Action "Water for Sustainable Development" 2018–2028. His Government's global water-related initiatives had contributed to raising awareness of those issues. He called on all Member States to support the draft resolution that his delegation would submit on a mid-term comprehensive review of the implementation of the International Decade for Action.

18. **Mr. Nebenzia** (Russian Federation) said that, in an era of great change brought about by scientific and technological progress and the digitization of many aspects of life, the system of multilateral cooperation, painstakingly built over decades, was coming undone. Breaking the rules had become the norm. The openness of markets and honest competition were being plagued by a variety of exemptions, restrictions and sanctions. Such restrictions, frequently extraterritorial in nature, distorted the entire panorama of international trade and collaboration and were increasingly aimed at choking off access to financial resources and new technologies. Disturbingly, sanctions were more and more often being used as a cover for protectionism. Those developments were dampening prospects for global growth and raised doubts regarding the chances of effectively implementing the 2030 Agenda.

19. The Russian Federation favoured free trade, economic integration and constructive dialogue between partners. It was unfair to ascribe all the problems affecting international trade to WTO. In trade, as in politics, one needed to negotiate, not dictate terms. The Committee should focus on how to overcome inequality of opportunities, address demographic and ecological challenges, preserve national cultures and identities, increase people's well-being and make the advantages of new technology widely accessible. Success should be measured in terms of practical results, effectiveness and intergovernmental consensus. The issues of debt, strengthening tax regulations, creating a transparent and non-discriminatory international system of trade and improving the mechanisms for technology transfer must be addressed. The needs of developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, should not be overlooked.

20. The Russian Federation was systematically stepping up its contribution to efforts to achieve sustainable development with large-scale socioeconomic and environmental programmes in various regions around the world. It was also increasing its delivery of food aid and broadening its involvement in joint projects with United Nations programmes and funds. In 2017, his Government's contribution to international development had totalled $1.16 billion. Reform of the United Nations development system should be aimed at making it more effective in assisting Member States to implement the 2030 Agenda. It was to be hoped that the anticipated cost reductions would permit the continued funding of a reformed resident coordinator system.

21. **Ms. Rodríguez Abascal** (Cuba) said that implementing the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement required a strong commitment, political will and cooperation between all Member States. The Committee must work on the basis of constructive debate, mutual respect and the sovereign equality of its members. Compliance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations should prevail and the imposition of non-consensual proposals that represented only the interests of developed countries must end.

22. Three years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, inequality and social polarization worldwide were worsening, including in the developed nations. The eradication of poverty in all its forms was essential for sustainable development. Annual global military expenditure of $1.7 trillion suggested that the resources to tackle those issues were available; the most powerful States, however, lacked the political will to fulfil their commitments. The developed countries were still far from meeting the target of devoting 0.7 per cent of their gross domestic product (GDP) as ODA to developing countries, and 0.15 per cent to 0.20 per cent to least developed countries. The problem of foreign debt, which had already been repaid several times over, must also be solved. A new international financial architecture was required and the technological and knowledge monopoly must be eliminated. South-South cooperation should not be viewed as a substitute for North-South cooperation and the industrialized countries must exercise the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. The achievement of the right to development could no longer be postponed. The recent reform of the United Nations development system must be implemented with due respect for national policies and priorities.

23. Climate change posed a threat to human survival. Although inadequate, the Paris Agreement was a starting point that should be maintained and developed. No country should unilaterally renounce its international responsibility in that regard or forget its ecological debt to humanity and future generations.

24. The vast majority of countries in the international community had repeatedly rejected the imposition of unilateral, coercive measures that impeded the full achievement of economic and social development, especially in developing countries. Cuba vigorously rejected that practice and once again urged States to refrain from unilaterally promulgating and implementing economic, financial or trade measures that were inconsistent with international law and the Charter of the United Nations. For nearly 60 years, the Cuban people had withstood the illegal, immoral and unjust economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the Government of the United States of America, which continued to be rigorously applied. Nevertheless, the people of Cuba remained committed to updating the country's economic and social model and implementing its 2030 development plan with a view to building an independent, sovereign, prosperous, democratic and sustainable socialist nation.

25. **Ms. Fisher-Tsin** (Israel) said that, while States had the primary responsibility for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, Governments alone could not do the necessary work; the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other actors must be involved. Effective democratic governance, zero tolerance for corruption and strong public education systems were conducive to lasting development. Science, research, technology and innovation were also critical and would need to be used wisely to feed the world's growing population, which was projected to be well above 8 billion by 2030. Small- and medium-sized businesses provided most jobs in developing countries. Governments should therefore create an enabling environment for entrepreneurship and provide training for people with initiative and solid ideas. Engaging in business provided a pathway for economic mobility, had a major impact on families and communities and was key to the economic empowerment of women. Moreover, increasing the resources available to women and ensuring their control over their own assets went hand in hand with efforts to strengthen women's rights, which her Government supported as an end in itself.

26. The Committee should strive for efficiency and impact, limiting the proliferation of resolutions, focusing on issues with wide application and ensuring that it was not transformed into another United Nations venue for politicized mud-slinging.

27. **Mr. Alkadi** (Saudi Arabia) said that his country had taken a major step towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals with its ambitious Vision 2030 programme. Several ministries and other institutions had been restructured so that they might contribute fully to the realization of the programme, which rested on three pillars: a vibrant society, a flourishing economy and an ambitious nation, reflected in the country's strong Arab and Islamic identity, its vocation as an investment powerhouse and its key geostrategic position. As part of the country's bid to become a major global economic player, his Government planned to simplify the business environment in order to encourage strategic investment partnerships with the private sector, create employment opportunities for citizens and drive prosperity for all. The goal of Vision 2030 was to place Saudi Arabia in the global vanguard by providing opportunities for all through education, employment initiatives, health and housing services and entertainment. Saudi Arabia would continue to work with its international partners to implement the 2030 Agenda and contribute whatever was required of it to that end, within the limits of its laws and customs.

28. **Ms. Bah-Chang** (Sierra Leone) said that her Government was working on a national development plan that was aligned with the 2030 Agenda and Agenda 2063 of the African Union. Under the plan, promoting education, justice, peace and security, and combating corruption and illicit financial flows had been identified as the key areas to be tackled. Under its education for development agenda, her Government was prioritizing free, high-quality primary and secondary education, with a focus on empowering women and girls.

29. Concerns regarding government accounting systems had been addressed. The Treasury single account provided a unified structure for the Government's bank accounts and contributed to the efficient and transparent management and use of public funds, given that all government cash resources were transferred to one consolidated revenue fund. Sierra Leone was committed to eliminating poverty and hunger by 2030. To that end, significant resource mobilization and improved access to public health, education and other social services were needed. Her Government recognized the progress achieved in making the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries operational and the significant advances made by some least developed countries towards graduation. Nonetheless, millions of people continued to live in extreme poverty and children were still dying of preventable diseases. New ways must be found to boost the effective implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action.

30. The threat posed by climate change, including to Sierra Leone, underlined the urgent need for renewed efforts to mobilize resources and provide technical assistance for building capacity and resilience, in line with the commitments made in the Addis Ababa Action

Agenda. It was to be hoped that the repositioning of the United Nations development system in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review would lead to increased support for least developed countries, particularly those with new Governments facing high expectations to deliver services, and to improved efficiency and accountability. The process should continue to be driven by Member States, while implementation plans should be guided by national strategies to ensure maximum coordination between United Nations entities at the regional and national levels.

31. **Mr. Hattrem** (Norway) said that the multilateral system, which had benefited all members of the international community, was under pressure. The 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement were all the result of multilateral cooperation. Climate change, conflict and instability were the worst enemies of sustainable development. More than 820 million people suffered from hunger and their number was rising. To reverse that trend, sustainable development must be pursued at all levels. Addressing climate change, which posed a threat to peace and security and had a particularly severe impact on small island developing States, was the key to sustainable transformation. It was equally vital to ensure the sound management and sustainable use of oceans. Destruction of marine ecosystems must stop and ocean productivity should increase. The High-level Panel on Building a Sustainable Ocean Economy would facilitate the achievement of those aims. All policy areas covered by the Sustainable Development Goals should also be informed by a gender perspective.

32. The reform of the United Nations development system, which Member States had a responsibility to fund adequately, must be carried out without delay. Norway would pay its share. Financing was critical for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. In that regard, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda provided comprehensive guidance. ODA would remain important, especially for least developed countries, and there was room for growth. For the past 10 years, Norway had allocated around 1 per cent of GDP to ODA and it would continue to honour its commitments in the future. Nevertheless, ODA alone could not transform societies. More must be done to mobilize domestic resources, promote fair taxation and eradicate corruption. Addressing illicit financial flows through national action and international cooperation was crucial to prevent the loss of the resources needed to achieve sustainable development.

33. **Mr.** Omer Dahab Fadl **Mohamed** (Sudan) said that the eradication of poverty and extreme poverty was indispensable for, and posed the greatest challenge to, achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The Sudanese Higher Committee for Sustainable Development, headed by the Vice-President, had been established to monitor progress in achieving those Goals under the national programme launched for that purpose. Relevant ministries were represented on the Higher Committee. The Sudan had presented a national voluntary review at the high-level political forum on sustainable development in July 2018 and would submit another in 2019. Its position as a country emerging from conflict and a low-income least developed country, its external debt burden and the presence of 2 million refugees in its territory had hampered its development and growth efforts and hence its poverty eradication programmes. The international community must look at ways to help the Sudan and other countries facing similar difficulties not to fall even further behind.

34. The Sudan appreciated the efforts of the Secretary-General to reform the United Nations development system. Financing was decisive for implementation of the 2030 Agenda and developed countries should fulfil their commitments to developing countries with regard to ODA, financing, capacity-building, technology transfer and debt forgiveness. The international community should also focus more on supporting countries emerging from conflict to transition from assistance to the reconstruction and development phase, which would be conducive to stability.

35. **Mr. Bin Momen** (Bangladesh) said that the vision of the 2030 Agenda was threatened by protracted economic stagnation, fiscal austerity, increased opposition to multilateralism and growing protectionism in wealthy countries, and a sustained decline in global partnerships for development with a concomitant failure to deliver on financial commitments. Climate change events and the advent of the fourth industrial revolution would also compound the uncertainty of the future. Serious and focused discussion on those issues would be required to collectively change the situation.

36. Bangladesh had implemented bold development plans, people-centred policies involving the whole of society, and fiscal reforms to place the country on a solid social and economic foundation. Its poverty rate and extreme poverty rate had both dropped in 2018, and 100 special economic zones being set up would help to create millions of job opportunities.

37. Solar power generation capacity had increased in remote areas and 90 per cent of the population enjoyed access to electricity. The Rooppur nuclear power plant was a step forward in the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Food security, access to medical facilities and access to sanitation and safe drinking water had been improved, and a social safety net had been established.

38. Through the Digital Bangladesh programme, which was popular with Bangladeshi youth, information and communications technology had been used to ensure good governance, accelerate development and create jobs. Transportation infrastructure development continued and various mega-development projects funded from the national budget were under way. Bangladesh had also launched its first satellite.

39. Bangladesh had earned global accolades for closing gender gaps and empowering women. Legal and development policies had been put in place to establish the rights of women and integrate them with national development efforts, creating job opportunities for women.

40. Bangladesh was highly vulnerable to climate change. It was committed to the Paris Agreement and had communicated its nationally determined contributions in 2016, articulating actions for the adaptation and mitigation of greenhouse gas emissions. It was also implementing a variety of projects, largely self-funded, to guard against the negative impacts of climate change and natural disasters.

41. In a landmark development achievement, Bangladesh had qualified for graduation from the least developed country category in 2018. The country would address the challenges arising from the withdrawal of benefits associated with that category by focusing on economic diversification and new markets. Transforming its huge population into a skilled workforce was a priority. A technology-driven society and growth through innovation would be required to attain its vision of achieving middle-income country status by 2021 and developed country status by 2041.

42. Financing would be the greatest challenge in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, which were integrated into its seventh five-year plan. It faced an average annual resource gap of $66.32 billion until 2030. The data gap, a barrier to monitoring the implementation of the Goals, was being addressed through SDG Tracker, a data repository.

43. Water was crucial for development and Member States should take urgent action to appraise, manage and invest in water. The needs and priorities of developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, should be emphasized in the implementation of the reform of the United Nations development system. Member States must identify the obstacles to the realization of the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, which included issues related to ODA, trade, foreign direct investment, domestic resource mobilization, technology transfer and capacity-building. The multilateral, rules-based trading system must be protected and South-South cooperation, as a complement to North-South cooperation, must be enhanced. A major challenge in the context of the fourth industrial revolution would be to create decent jobs, tackle inequality and ensure that the benefits of technological change were available to all.

44. **Mr. Al-Laithi** (Iraq) said that financial support, technology transfer, the promotion of investment and the stimulation of the private sector were the key means by which developed countries and international organizations could help developing countries, especially in special cases such as that of Iraq after its long war against Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). The Government had launched policies to rein in inflation and government spending, modernize State banks and activate the private banking sector, notwithstanding the collapse of oil prices and the effects of the war, which had drained the country's resources, ruined its infrastructure, driven off investment and impaired its human resources through the internal displacement of 6 million people.

45. Priorities under his Government's comprehensive development plan for the period 2018–2022, which had been launched in the wake of the defeat of ISIL and the recovery of global oil prices, included returning the displaced to their home towns, rebuilding infrastructure, activating the private sector and attracting foreign investment. His Government had been able, with the support of the international community, to help around 60 per cent of the displaced to return home. Donors should assist Iraq in implementing its plan, which would bring stability and prosperity to the country and have a positive knock-on effect on the troubled Middle East region. Partners that had promised to provide assistance must do so urgently. Iraq had paid a heavy price to win its war against international terrorism and looked to the international community for support in achieving comprehensive and sustainable development.

46. A period of harsh drought and falling water levels had led to widespread desertification and a tangible rise in average temperatures in Iraq, hitting the farming sector and posing a serious threat to food security. All countries sharing water resources should uphold the principle of their equitable distribution. His Government was ready to work with its neighbours to reach a just agreement to that end.

47. **Mr. Srivihok** (Thailand) said that, while progress had been made in implementing the 2030 Agenda, it was

not fast enough or consistent across regions and countries. Multilateralism was being questioned, and in that context, the work of the Committee was more important than ever. It needed clear priorities and increased efficiency in order to maintain its practical relevance and help rebuild confidence in the United Nations.

48. Financing for development was a key issue and, in that regard, his delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's strategy for financing the 2030 Agenda. ODA, domestic resource mobilization and good governance remained crucial to financing the Goals. Thailand supported innovative and affordable financing solutions, such as Sustainable Development Goal bonds and green bonds. In addition to public-private partnerships, new potential stakeholders, including philanthropists, could play a positive role in supporting financing for development.

49. Widespread protectionism and growing trade tensions, which hurt trade-dependent developing countries in particular, were a matter of concern. Thailand firmly believed in free and fair trade and reaffirmed its commitment to a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system, as embodied in the World Trade Organization.

50. More political will was needed to tackle climate change and natural disasters, which continued to pose challenges to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, affecting rich and poor alike. Disaster risk reduction, which was a shared responsibility of all stakeholders, must be mainstreamed into national development policies, with effective action taken at both the local and national levels. The private sector could provide financial resources and technology, while the United Nations should deepen and broaden the scale, scope and diversity of the partnerships needed to implement the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction (2015–2030) and the Sustainable Development Goals.

51. The achievement of the 2030 Agenda required partnerships at all levels and active participation from all parts of society. Thailand had applied a holistic approach of public-private-people partnerships in its development. As the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Coordinator on Sustainable Development Cooperation, Thailand had worked to deepen cooperation with United Nations agencies in the area. As Chair of ASEAN in 2019, it planned to establish an ASEAN Centre for Sustainable Development Studies and Dialogue to further strengthen partnerships.

52. Thailand had always supported South-South and triangular cooperation, in addition to North-South cooperation, with the goal of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and helping to complete the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals. South-South and triangular cooperation should follow a demand-driven approach and help to build self-reliance. Thailand had contributed $520,000 to the Pérez-Guerrero Trust Fund for South-South cooperation in 2016 and an additional $50,000 to the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation in 2018.

53. Thailand welcomed the Secretary-General's initiative for the repositioning of the United Nations development system and had contributed $200,000 to the Special Purpose Trust Fund to reinvigorate the resident coordinator system. In that context, it looked forward to the Secretary-General's detailed proposal, on a region-by-region basis, for revamping the regional economic commissions.

54. **Mr. Carazo** (Costa Rica) said that poverty eradication must be approached from a multidimensional perspective. Macroeconomic indicators could not reflect the capabilities of individual countries to overcome poverty, ensure access to decent work, eliminate inequality, effectively empower women and overcome socioeconomic and environmental vulnerabilities.

55. Lapses in food safety were the cause of illness in 600 million people worldwide each year. Technical and scientific food safety guidelines must be created to ensure access to safe food for all. Costa Rica would therefore introduce a draft resolution proposing the establishment of a World Food Safety Day to be celebrated on 7 June each year.

56. Costa Rica welcomed the decision to proclaim 2019–2028 the United Nations Decade of Family Farming, as a platform to emphasize the importance of family farmers to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. The Committee should also work to advance the programme of work for the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent.

57. Costa Rica attached great importance to the promotion of good governance around the world, It was therefore important to detect and prevent illicit financial flows and promote initiatives favouring open government, accountability and compliance with international standards such as the United Nations Convention against Corruption. States must promote investment, innovation and a favourable economic environment for business, in order to create optimal conditions for the mobilization of development resources. Member States should also strengthen

cooperation platforms to enable knowledge-sharing on fiscal matters.

58. Costa Rica sought to promote an ambitious environmental vision, particularly with regard to implementing the Paris Agreement and combating climate change. As such, it wished to share its experience in forest conservation and renewable energy generation as part of the deep decarbonization of the economy. Combating pollution should be a shared goal. In that context, the Committee should welcome and build on the outcomes of the third session of the United Nations Environment Assembly. The United Nations should also be at the forefront of deliberations regarding the challenges and opportunities presented by new technologies in relation to sustainable development.

59. Development financing should take account of the particularities of each country to ensure that assistance was channelled to those most in need.

60. **Mr. García Moritán** (Argentina) said that the protection of children's rights and the empowerment of young people through education and access to decent work were key to achieving sustainable development. Argentina, in conjunction with the International Labour Organization, had hosted the fourth Global Conference on the Sustained Eradication of Child Labour, which had resulted in the Buenos Aires Declaration on Child Labour, Forced Labour and Youth Employment. Argentina would continue to work actively in the United Nations for the eradication of child labour and called on all countries to fully support that work.

61. Despite the expansion of South-South cooperation since the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries in 1978, the countries of the global South continued to face significant economic, social and environmental challenges. South-South and triangular cooperation must therefore be strengthened at all levels. The Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, to be held in Buenos Aires in March 2019, would be an opportunity to review lessons learned, identify new areas of greatest impact and establish appropriate follow-up mechanisms within the United Nations system. It would be important to consider how to reflect the integration of the three pillars of sustainable development and the interrelated nature of the Sustainable Development Goals within the policies and practices of South-South cooperation. Knowledge gaps, and uneven access to solutions and resources, continued to significantly hinder full realization of the potential of South-South cooperation. Those gaps must be addressed and, in that regard, the outcomes of the Conference should include a call for enhanced efforts to promote capacity-building and technology transfer. The Conference should also contribute to strengthening regional and interregional platforms, which could help to identify broad, inclusive development strategies. South-South cooperation was a complement to, not a substitute for North-South cooperation. It had the potential to revitalize multilateralism and galvanize the global partnership for sustainable development. A high-level mechanism should be created to regularly review trends in South-South and triangular cooperation, their contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and the progress made by the international community and the United Nations system.

62. **Mr. Hermida Castillo** (Nicaragua) said that the world was at a critical juncture for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Endemic poverty and inequality had become even more marked in developed and developing countries alike, especially for peoples living under colonial and foreign occupation. Coercive economic measures were a significant obstacle to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and must be lifted.

63. The right to development was a right for all. Nicaragua urged the developed countries to finally meet their ODA commitments and to provide additional, predictable and sufficient financial resources. The focus of the Committee's work over the next decade must be to foster unity among its members and work together to overcome challenges. Its most urgent commitment was poverty eradication.

64. Financing for development was also crucial for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In that context, the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities must be respected. Developing countries could not be expected to have the same responsibilities as developed countries. A genuine global alliance meant providing them with access to financial and technological resources.

65. His Government had worked steadily to implement the 2030 Agenda. Nicaragua was one of the most successful countries in the region in terms of sustained economic growth and had achieved a significant reduction in both extreme poverty and overall poverty between 2009 and 2016.

66. Urgent action was needed to combat climate change. Developed countries should take the lead in that regard and change their unsustainable modes of production and consumption. They should also meet their financial commitments, including through technology transfer. Nicaragua would continue to work within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change towards an outcome that reflected the

gravity of the climate crisis and protected the ecosystems that supported life on Earth. In the light of recent catastrophic hurricanes and earthquakes, his delegation called for ongoing disaster risk reduction efforts, with the support of donors and the international community.

67. Nicaragua reiterated its solidarity with the Palestinian people in their struggle for freedom and the exercise of their inalienable rights. As peoples living under occupation were also entitled to development, his delegation supported the inclusion in the Committee's agenda of the annual resolution on permanent sovereignty of the Palestinian people in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, and of the Arab population in the occupied Syrian Golan over their natural resources.

68. **Mr. Sukhee** (Mongolia) said that, three years into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the international community had made significant progress in operationalizing the Sustainable Development Goals at the national level, while joint efforts to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda needed to be further strengthened through close partnerships and an improved environment for development. A stable global economy was a key factor for the achievement of the Goals.

69. Mongolia had been working to ensure coherence between the Sustainable Development Goals and national development strategies and policies. It aspired, by 2030, to consolidate democratic governance, preserve ecological balance, eradicate all forms of poverty and achieve upper middle-income country status. It had recently experienced robust economic growth with accelerated foreign trade turnover, increased investment in the mining sector and budget surpluses. The International Monetary Fund Extended Fund Facility had been implemented, causing economic growth to surge between 2016 and the first half of 2018, with further increases expected in 2019. Mongolia planned to present its first voluntary national review on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2019.

70. Climate change and disaster risk remained daunting challenges for humanity. The implementation of the Paris Agreement had failed to meet expectations and shared responsibilities had been insufficiently shouldered. In that regard, his delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's call for a climate summit to be convened in 2019. Asia was one of the most disaster-prone regions in the world, and Mongolia was therefore keen to contribute to regional cooperation to enhance disaster resilience, reduce risk and increase the effectiveness of disaster prevention activities. During the Ulaanbaatar Dialogue on Northeast Asian Security and the Asian Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2018, its proposal to establish a North-East Asia disaster risk reduction platform in Mongolia had received support from countries in the region.

71. Mongolia had recently called for the launch of the North-East Asian Super Grid project, which would provide energy security, create jobs and reduce carbon dioxide emissions for countries in that region. Furthermore, it was working to develop strategic partnerships with China and the Russian Federation.

72. Mongolia attached great importance to South-South cooperation and was contributing to it by promoting the interests of landlocked developing countries. In that regard, the International Think Tank for Landlocked Developing Countries, based in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, was now fully operational. It would help to generate knowledge and develop analytical tools to overcome common challenges.

73. **Mr. Konfourou** (Mali) said that his country had been beset by a deeply rooted and multidimensional crisis since 2012, caused by underdevelopment, extreme poverty, vulnerability to climate change, food insecurity and malnutrition. Those challenges must be addressed before a truly lasting peace could be established in Mali. His Government had therefore made every effort to provide the people with the dividends of peace, especially drinking water, electricity and other basic needs, education, health care and rural roads. Development projects with immediate impact, including income-generating activities aimed especially at youth, refugees and internally displaced persons who had returned to their place of origin, had been implemented in the most vulnerable regions of the country.

74. In July 2018, Mali had presented its voluntary national review at the high-level political forum on sustainable development, highlighting the progress made in the implementation of the Strategic Framework for Economic Recovery and Sustainable Development, which covered the period 2016–2018. The review had also described the challenges and outlook regarding a number of priority issues: strengthening peace and security, consolidating macroeconomic stability, promoting accelerated, sustainable and pro-poor growth that would generate employment, ensuring equitable access to basic social services, and improving institutional development and good governance. Significant progress had been made in paving roads to improve access to remote regions and across borders. The Government had allocated 15 per cent of the national budget to the agricultural sector, significantly

exceeding the commitment of 10 per cent made in the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. At the same time, the Government had implemented a social safety net programme to transfer funds to poor households suffering from food insecurity, which had benefited over 60,000 households by the end of September 2016 and aimed to provide assistance to over 91,000 households by the end of 2019. His Government was convinced that gender equality was essential to eradicate poverty and improve living conditions. In November 2015, a law had been adopted to promote gender equality in elected and appointed positions.

75. Mali fully supported the Secretary-General's reform of the United Nations development system, and especially the resident coordinator system. It joined other delegations in calling for partners to make appropriate voluntary contributions so that a reinvigorated resident coordinator system could be fully operational as early as January 2019.

76. His Government would continue to combat poverty and work to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. However, the related development projects would require an immense injection of resources unavailable in a country like Mali. Therefore, while he acknowledged the constant support of the international community, he urgently called on all development partners to honour the commitments they had made at the Together for a New Mali conference held in Brussels in 2013 and the Building an Emerging Mali conference held in Paris in 2015.

77. **Mr. Kemayah, Sr.** (Liberia) said that the theme for the general debate at the seventy-third session of the General Assembly, "Making the United Nations relevant to all people: Global leadership and shared responsibilities for peaceful, equitable and sustainable societies", was an embodiment of the 2030 Agenda. Member States must consolidate their efforts to stamp out poverty, disease and hunger and provide a sustainable livelihood for all to protect vulnerable populations and the environment for succeeding generations. Progress to date had not been rapid enough to meet the targets of the 2030 Agenda. Successful reform of the United Nations development system was also required to make the United Nations relevant to the people of the world and enhance the system's capacity to support countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda.

78. His Government had designed a national development plan known as the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development, through which it aimed to empower the people by reducing developmental inequalities; stimulate economic stability and job creation through effective resource mobilization and economic inclusion; promote a peaceful and cohesive society for sustainable development; and enhance governance and transparency by creating an inclusive and accountable public sector.

79. To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, the infrastructure gap and debt vulnerability of developing countries, especially least developed countries, must be addressed. An enabling development environment, means of implementation and domestic resource mobilization would be required. To achieve the latter, Liberia was expanding its internal revenue generation and collection, and strengthening national oversight institutions in keeping with its commitment to transparency and accountability in public financial management. However, despite its political will, it could not raise all the necessary resources alone and would need to rely on the assistance of its regional and international partners to achieve full implementation of the Goals.

80. **Ms. Pham** (Viet Nam) said that the Committee needed to take advantage of the momentum of the first three years of implementation of the 2030 Agenda. While each country was responsible for accelerating the implementation of the Goals, international cooperation was crucial to ensure an enabling environment for achieving sustainable development. Several priorities had emerged that should be addressed with heightened urgency at the international level. All development stakeholders needed to step up their efforts to provide tailored assistance to the countries that were most vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters, including her own. To enhance preparedness, long-term and integrated solutions were needed.

81. Measures to level the playing field in international trade by promoting a rules-based, open, transparent, predictable, inclusive, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system were also of vital importance in order to enable countries to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development.

82. Unfortunately, the benefits of scientific and technological innovation remained a distant promise for the majority of the poor. The digital divide between developed and developing countries remained a concern, with high-speed broadband penetration in developing countries reaching only 6 per cent of the population, compared with more than 24 per cent in developed countries in 2016. Her Government therefore called on development partners to take the lead in providing technical assistance, capacity-building and technology and knowledge transfer. It also called for the operationalization of the online platform of the

Technology Facilitation Mechanism to disseminate information on existing related initiatives, mechanisms and programmes.

83. Lower middle-income countries like Viet Nam still had inherent vulnerabilities. However, many donors had been phasing out or downscaling their bilateral programmes in those countries, which often still needed ODA and other concessional finance. Her delegation called on donor countries to fulfil their commitments and provide support to help middle-income countries strengthen their resilience. The United Nations system should develop comprehensive methods to track the progress of sustainable development using measures that went beyond per capita income.

84. **Mr. Mohamed** (Maldives) said that the 2030 Agenda was the universal road map for global development challenges. It was important to place the Committee's deliberations in the context of ongoing efforts to reform the United Nations development system, so as to create more synergies between the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the high-level political forum on sustainable development. The Samoa Pathway must also be at the centre of the Committee's discussions and efforts to meet the commitments contained therein must be accelerated.

85. National ownership and impetus was vital for economic development. Countries must be able to set their own development vision and recognize their own abilities to take the necessary steps towards a prosperous future. At the same time, the international system must support the development efforts of small island developing States in the form of capacity-building, technology transfer and access to finance in order for them to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

86. The Maldives had pursued economic development policies based on the belief that the best strategy for coping with inherent vulnerabilities was to build national resilience. The close alliances it maintained with its own private sector and external partners, as well as increasingly with non-traditional development partners, had resulted in significant progress across economic, social and developmental sectors, as clearly illustrated by its voluntary national review in 2017.

87. However, the Maldives still faced challenges in attracting investment in certain crucial areas. International public finance could be mobilized for mutual benefit and would be critical to its achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. His Government sought to establish an enabling environment that did not place middle-income countries at a disadvantage.

88. The United Nations development system must evolve to cater to the needs of Member States in their implementation of global development frameworks. Countries in special situations, such as small island developing States, required particular support. His delegation therefore urged Member States to allocate additional resources to the United Nations so that it could better assist such countries to achieve the relevant outcomes.

89. **Mr. Locsin, Jr.** (Philippines) said that his country's development plans incorporated all 17 of the Sustainable Development Goals. The three pillars of sustainable development were interlinked, and it was therefore urgent to reduce extreme poverty, which went against the moral imperative to ensure the universal attainment of the Goals. No-one should advance at the expense of another, and generational sacrifice on behalf of another generation was unfair unless willingly shouldered. The world had outgrown visions and had matured into practical compassion.

90. Reform of the United Nations development system was vital. Multilateralism was not a self-evident good if it could not function effectively because of inefficiency, redundancy and waste. The United Nations must be restored to its historical role as an organization of States first and foremost, existing for State-sponsored multilateral purposes that were always strictly in accordance with the goals of the Charter. It was far more than a podium for the expression of grand grievances for anyone pushing their way in. States were primarily responsible for the success of the world, and they alone had the wherewithal to achieve that success.

91. A more realistic statistical measure of middle-income countries was needed. The luxury of throwing money at problems, hoping that some would hit the spot, could no longer be afforded. Migration was not just a desperate measure to escape badly-governed States, it was also an enabler of development. Thus, aggregate remittance flows were potential sources of substantial private capital if properly handled. In addition, the Philippines championed family farming, which, although at risk of dying out, still accounted for 80 per cent of the world's food. Disaster risk reduction and climate action must inform national development plans and be integrated into United Nations programmes. Weather was not predictable and its destructive power could not be estimated beforehand. Therefore, capacity-building for climate action must be based on national capacities and needs, as well as on the imperative to extend international help.

92. Lastly, it was the responsibility of all members of the international community to rescue and relieve any

part of humanity that was at risk of, or already undergoing, violent mass extinction. Intervention must be swift but also careful, so as not to worsen the situation, either inadvertently or by design.

93. **Ms. Shurbaji** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that if the United Nations was serious about helping countries to achieve sustainable development, then it must call for an immediate halt to the unilateral coercive measures which were dragging down the Syrian economy, worsening human development indicators, fuelling poverty and food insecurity and damaging vital sectors such as health care, education and power generation. In that regard, the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights had expressed concern that such measures were contributing to the ongoing suffering of the Syrian people. Moreover, Israel continued to exploit and deplete natural resources in the occupied Syrian Golan. General Assembly resolution 1803 (XVII) on permanent sovereignty over natural resources was especially relevant in that regard.

94. The Syrian Arab Republic was now experiencing an exceptional period of increased security and stability thanks to advances in the fight against terrorism. Her Government wished to rebuild areas destroyed by the terrorists and facilitate the return of refugees. That could not be achieved as long as the political agendas of certain Governments stood in the way. The Syrian people were looking to the United Nations, its agencies and specialized bodies to switch their focus from the provision of humanitarian assistance to development aid for reconstruction, without double standards, political interference in the country's internal affairs or attempts to impose guidelines that confined their support to humanitarian assistance alone.

95. **Ms. Díaz Corona** (Mexico), speaking as a youth delegate, said that the participation of youth and women was imperative to ensure the mainstreaming of the 2030 Agenda. Inclusive economic growth was fundamental in that context, as were strengthened public policies to promote the transformative potential of all, including youth, women, migrants, indigenous peoples and other marginalized populations.

96. Mexico was committed to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. As such, it had recently amended its Planning Act to include the three pillars of sustainable development and the principles of equity, inclusion and non-discrimination in national planning. A national council bringing together the three branches of national Government, local governments, the private sector, civil society and academia had been established to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. A multidimensional approach to poverty should be taken, maintaining the integrated and indivisible nature of the Agenda. In that regard, the organization of the high-level political forum on sustainable development should be re-examined, since it currently focused on a subset of the Sustainable Development Goals at each session, rather than on the linkages among them.

97. During the current session, the Committee should focus on four key topics. The first was rapid technological change, since the promotion of technological innovation was key to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Efforts within the United Nations should be coordinated in that regard. Second, all parties would benefit from a universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory and equitable multilateral trading system. Third, climate change was of particular importance. States had a shared responsibility and a moral obligation to fulfil the Paris Agreement. During the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, guidelines applicable to all parties to the Agreement must be set forth and more ambitious nationally determined contributions must be established. Finally, the reform of the United Nations development system was necessary to adapt the institutional framework to the 2030 Agenda. Based on the Secretary-General's strategy for financing the 2030 Agenda, the Secretariat should now work to ensure that the system was operational in 2019.

98. The work of the Committee must be reinvigorated. To achieve that, divisions between developed and developing countries must be overcome. Resolutions on some items should be considered only every two or three years, since the discussion of certain topics and the adoption of certain draft resolutions had become anachronistic and did not focus on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Even worse, in some cases the Committee was duplicating the work of the Economic and Social Council, its subsidiary bodies and the high-level political forum for sustainable development. Only by working effectively together would it be possible to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda. Eleven years remained and the clock was ticking.

99. **Mr. Skoknic Tapia** (Chile) said that it remained urgent for the United Nations development system to adopt multidimensional mechanisms to measure poverty and development. Per capita income should not be the only criterion used to measure the development status of a country. His delegation welcomed steps taken by some institutions to recognize the multidimensional nature of development. The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development had begun discussing the

concept of "development in transition" to describe countries transitioning from one income level to another and facing both great opportunities and great challenges. Chile welcomed the establishment by the European Union of the Facility for Development in Transition, to be implemented beginning in 2019, as an acknowledgement of the dilemma facing that new group of countries.

100. Chile reaffirmed the principles of international trade and the legitimacy and competency of the United Nations to address that issue. His delegation welcomed the offer by Argentina to host the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation in Buenos Aires in March 2019. The Conference would be an opportunity to acknowledge the increasing importance of South-South and triangular cooperation in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

101. Migration contributed to the development of countries of origin, transit and destination when managed in a safe and orderly manner with respect for the human rights of migrants and in compliance with international law. Chile was grateful to the co-facilitators of negotiations on the Global Compact for Migration, which had resulted in the consensus document to be adopted in Morocco in December 2018.

102. The twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change would be an important milestone in the full implementation of the Paris Agreement. The commitments under that Agreement were non-negotiable and could be effectively addressed through the transformation of production and consumption models, with increased use of renewable energies. Plastic represented a grave threat to the world's oceans, and Governments must act quickly to protect them. Chile had therefore banned the commercial use of single-use plastic bags.

103. Chile reiterated its concern regarding agricultural productivity, sustainable water use, food safety and urban-rural connections. Poverty and substandard living conditions in urban areas must be addressed with firm resolve.

104. His delegation reiterated its commitment to implementing the Secretary-General's reform of the United Nations development system and looked forward to continued discussion on how to achieve comprehensive reform of the global, regional and local dimensions of operational activities for development, which should be tailored to distinct development realities and needs.

105. Partnerships for development between the public and private sector, academia and civil society must be diversified and enhanced, since the involvement of all relevant stakeholders was a requirement for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Chile reaffirmed the undeniable legitimacy of the United Nations and recognized the key work of the General Assembly and the Second Committee, in particular, in addressing macroeconomic, social and environmental matters within the framework of multilateralism. He called for flexibility and solidarity to achieve the best results during the current session, and for consensus to remain the principal mechanism for the adoption of resolutions.

106. **Mr. Mero** (United Republic of Tanzania) said that climate change, assaults on multilateralism, increasing protectionism, persistent inequality, a disorderly tightening of financial conditions and escalating geopolitical tensions could disrupt development and hinder the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Those challenges should be collectively addressed within a multilateral framework to speed progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda. Appropriate emphasis should be placed on an enabling global environment and global partnerships for development as well as on domestic resource mobilization.

107. The United Republic of Tanzania had strengthened its tax management system, as a result of which it had doubled its revenue collection. His Government had also declared that primary and secondary education should be universal and free, and continued to strengthen its health system and facilities to treat both communicable and non-communicable diseases. A health insurance system had been established.

108. His Government was making infrastructure investments focused on energy, a high-speed railway system to neighbouring countries and all-season roads. It was promoting investment in manufacturing, agriculture and other productive sectors to stimulate economic growth. A country-wide fibre-optic network and data centre had been operationalized.

109. Despite ongoing efforts to mobilize domestic resources, developing countries were experiencing ongoing tax regime issues and illicit financial flows that contributed to capital flight and denied developing countries their rightful income. The international community should redouble its efforts to combat those systemic issues by addressing tax competition and avoidance through the Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters. The overall purpose of that Committee should be to prevent international tax evasion by ensuring that Governments made a commitment to refrain from eroding each other's

tax bases and to create a transparent, coherent international tax system that supported equality and development. That would provide more resources to developing countries for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. They needed help to fight global and multinational corruption, benefit from their natural resources and carve out a fair space in the global financial and trade architecture.

110. Developing countries could not eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development without predictable, timely and sustainable support. In that connection, the third Economic and Social Council forum on financing for development held in April 2018, at which member States had called for the implementation of inter-governmentally agreed conclusions, had been crucial. It was important to assess progress, identify challenges to the implementation of financing for development outcomes, address new and emerging topics of relevance for the implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and provide policy recommendations on developed countries' support for developing countries.

The meeting rose at 5.55 p.m.

United Nations A/C.2/73/SR.4

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Second Committee

Summary record of the 4th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 9 October 2018, at 10 a.m.

Chair:	Mr. Skinner-Klée Arenales	(Guatemala)
later:	Ms. Alateibi (Vice-Chair)	(United Arab Emirates)
later:	Mr. Skinner-Klée Arenales	(Guatemala)

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General debate (*continued*)

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18-16808 (E)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

General debate (*continued*)

1. **Mr. Al-Kuwari** (Qatar) said that the optimal way to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development was through international cooperation and the adoption of comprehensive transitional measures based on different developmental levels and national priorities.

2. To align its national strategy for 2018–2022, Qatar had identified priorities in its National Vision 2030, in addition to developing a system for monitoring the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, progress on which had been described in its 2018 voluntary review. In 2017, his Government had co-hosted the High-level Conference on Financing for Development and the Means of Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that had resulted in the 10 "Doha Messages" on enhanced cooperation on the 2030 Agenda and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

3. Unsustainable resource use, climate change, food insecurity, malnutrition, political instability and conflict required a more comprehensive and coordinated response, particularly to assist least developed countries and provide equal opportunities for all, notably women, children and people with disabilities. Universal quality education had a pivotal role in ensuring a more sustainable future and capacity-building. International trade was a powerful enabler of sustained economic growth, sustainable development and an open, fair and non-discriminatory multilateral trading system.

4. Having increased its humanitarian assistance from almost $5 million in 2008 to $2 billion in 2017, Qatar was working to assist various countries and advance its strategic projects and relationships with its neighbours despite pressure to backtrack on its cooperation through the imposition of illegal politicized unilateral sanctions. Qatar would remain an active partner in the pursuit of sustainable development for the good of humanity.

5. **Mr. Boukadoum** (Algeria) said that the Committee remained pivotal in addressing global issues including economic growth, financing for development and poverty eradication; once a forum for cold war rivalry, it had since seen a reconciliation of divergent views on development; yet there was still a long way to go to achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. It was commonly agreed that there were sufficient human, financial, material and technological resources in the world to end hunger, eradicate poverty, and prevent or mitigate disease. The failure to achieve those objectives could be attributed to human selfishness and a lack of political will. Without adequate support, the Goals could not be achieved.

6. His delegation was proud to have co-facilitated with Denmark the reform of the United Nations development system to align it with the 2030 Agenda. General Assembly resolution 72/279 was not perfect, but represented the best attainable outcome of a multilateral process in a difficult context. While accountability and transparency were key components of an efficient reform process, it was essential to provide the United Nations development system with the necessary human, financial and logistic resources.

7. The Economic and Social Council, which, along with the General Assembly, was the most representative and democratic forum with the legitimacy to deliberate and make recommendations on global integrated economic and development policy, could and should be utilized for that purpose.

8. **Mr. Cisse** (Guinea) said that implementation of the 2030 Agenda called for the pooling of efforts to mobilize resources for large-scale funding of growth-generating sectors. Time was running out, and the required resources already existed. The only way for the international community to build peaceful, resilient, fair, equitable and sustainable societies was for least developed countries to mobilize their internal resources, developed countries to honour commitments made at international forums, and the private sector to boost global development.

9. Guinea was intensifying its efforts to implement programmes for the elimination of all forms of poverty; it was also working on the judicious exploitation of its extensive gold, diamond, bauxite and other mineral and water resources for the benefit of current and future generations and was promoting public and private investment. His Government had undertaken significant reforms through two five-year development plans; under its 2011–2015 five-year plan it had launched economic and social reforms and succeeded in slashing the national debt, helping to halve inflation, improve living conditions and reduce poverty. The 2016–2020 national economic and social development plan had been submitted to the advisory group in November 2017 and had generated funding pledges of $21 billion.

10. In July 2018, Guinea had presented its first voluntary national report on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, documenting a net increase in economic growth and remarkable improvement in socioeconomic indicators.

Recommendations had been made for statistical capacity-building to better evaluate implementation of the Goals, strengthening of coordination and public-private partnership in monitoring their implementation, dissemination of the Goals for improved ownership by all population sectors and development actors, and enhancement of internal resource mobilization to boost growth in all domains.

11. **Mr. Rasuli** (Afghanistan) said that globalization and international interdependency had transformed development into a multifaceted concept linked to all domains, from social development to peace and security, that required a sustainable approach with long-term solutions. The 2030 Agenda provided tools for ending poverty, hunger and inequality, taking action on climate change and environmental degradation, improving access to health and education, and enhancing cooperation for a peaceful and prosperous world free from violence and terrorism.

12. Under its national peace and development framework, his Government had aligned its plans and policies with the 2030 Agenda. In November 2018, it would hold a ministerial conference with the United Nations to discuss development and reform strategies, at which it would provide updates on the progress made and explain how development could help promote peace and security nationally.

13. Although headway had been made, implementation of the 2030 Agenda remained a particular challenge for countries in conflict and post-conflict situations. His delegation considered that the strengthening of the connection between peace and security and development should be a priority for the Committee. Financing for the Goals was also crucial. Afghanistan affirmed the primary importance of official development assistance (ODA) to achieving sustainable development and economic growth, particularly for least developed countries and landlocked developing countries. Member States should come together to ensure the proper implementation of the Paris Agreement, and honour their financial commitments for enhancing adaptation capacity in developing countries.

14. **Ms. Mills** (Jamaica) said that unevenness in global economic growth posed continuing challenges for developing countries, and particularly for small, vulnerable and highly indebted economies such as that of Jamaica. However, her Government remained confident that through concerted effort and partnerships, it would be possible to overcome the challenges and achieve poverty eradication and sustainable development for all.

15. Highly indebted middle-income countries like Jamaica were poised for economic transition, but their potential was gravely threatened by having to choose between high debt repayments and catalytic growth spending, highlighting the importance of the differentiated use of borrowed resources. Effective public investment in infrastructure and productive capacity could positively influence fiscal space and debt sustainability, but should be subject to appropriate public debt management. International financial institutions should not treat all types of debt in the same way.

16. Climate change remained an existential threat for the peoples of the Caribbean and other small island States, as evidenced during the 2017 hurricane season. Jamaica fully supported the development of a climate change vulnerability index for better channelling of international resources to the most susceptible countries, and welcomed the proposal of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to convene an event with public and private stakeholders to help build resilience in the Caribbean. Her Government looked forward to collaboration with development partners on long-term solutions to catastrophic events, and with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean on its debt-for-climate-adaptation swap proposal.

17. An enormous pool of capital needed to be mobilized to achieve improved developmental outcomes. It was clear that traditional approaches to financing development would be insufficient. Quality of financing was also crucial for identifying catalytic interventions to drive positive outcomes across multiple Goals. In 2017, her Government had approved a road map for the implementation of the Goals. The real challenge was the implementation of policies for rapid and sustained progress on the Goals in the context of limited fiscal space. Jamaica had presented its first voluntary national review in 2018 and had been pleased to share the many lessons learned and the experiences gained.

18. **Ms. Khyne** (Myanmar) said that accelerated and concerted efforts were needed to achieve the targets of the 2030 Agenda. Myanmar underscored the need for synergy and coherence in implementing the 2030 Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the New Urban Agenda. Achieving the Goals would require meaningful partnerships among all actors and full and timely fulfilment of the commitments made. Least developed countries needed special attention through mobilization

of resources, capacity-building and technology transfer to ensure equitable progress.

19. Myanmar welcomed the second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation as an important opportunity to enhance the individual and collective pursuit of sustained economic growth and sustainable development. Science, technology and innovation were critical enablers of accelerated progress. Within and among countries, there remained uneven access to and use of information and communications technologies, which cut across all the Goals and must be harnessed to eliminate poverty and inequality, boost shared prosperity and develop knowledge societies. Technical and financial support for the technology bank being operationalized for least developed countries in 2018 would be crucial in bridging technology gaps.

20. Climate change had become an existential threat to every country. Despite the limited progress on implementing the Paris Agreement, Myanmar looked forward to a successful twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in December 2018.

21. Myanmar's Sustainable Development Plan for 2018–2030 was aligned with the 2030 Agenda and her Government looked forward to the cooperation and support of development partners and international organizations. Myanmar remained strongly committed to global development agreements in line with its national development needs and priorities.

22. **Ms. Theofili** (Greece) said that the post-2015 era had merged the poverty and sustainability agendas and provided a framework for dealing more effectively with a growing number of interdependent global policy issues. The 2030 Agenda provided an ambitious framework for equitable and sustainable development and was consistent with the interests, values and principles for which Greece had worked globally for decades.

23. Faced with the severe economic crisis and the migration and refugee crisis of the past decade, Greece needed a new social contract. In July 2018, her country had presented its first voluntary national review. Her Government's foreign and security policies were helping achieve the Sustainable Development Goals through trade and investment, development cooperation, economic and sectoral cooperation, and the promotion of peace, security, respect for human rights, gender equality, the rule of law and good governance. Faced with challenges in its region, Greece was a pillar of stability, promoting collaboration, dialogue and mutual understanding.

24. Greece supported the Secretary-General's reform agenda and was committed to constructive participation in its implementation. Eradicating poverty, addressing inequalities and providing decent working conditions demanded a more inclusive model of development that promoted sustainable growth, created jobs, reduced inequality and did not harm the environment. One national priority was a shift towards a circular economy and sustainable consumption and production patterns, including renewable and sustainable energy. The national implementation plan for the Goals was scheduled for 2019 and fostered an integrated approach to planning and implementation at different governance levels, promoting policy coherence for sustainable development.

25. **Mr. Muhammad Bande** (Nigeria) said that his delegation welcomed the convening of the High-Level Meeting on Financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the reaffirmation of the need to focus investment on long-term gains, vulnerable countries and sectors, and better data for measuring the Sustainable Development Goals and ensuring equitable access to benefits of new technologies. Nigeria was implementing a national social investment programme providing safety nets for the poor, welfare for the unemployed, and job creation and skills enhancement for the underprivileged, and had also introduced an economic recovery and growth plan aimed to ensure inclusive growth, sustainable development, and investment in key social sectors.

26. The unprecedented impacts of climate change were particularly devastating for the poorest countries. Desertification was also a pressing problem, including in Nigeria. His Government had implemented climate change response policies and strategies, and was collaborating with other Governments and agencies on replenishing Lake Chad, which supported millions of people and had shrunk by 90 per cent in recent decades, fuelling large-scale migration, conflicts and serious humanitarian consequences. He called on the international community to implement the relevant United Nations conventions.

27. Skyrocketing illicit financial flows were a major drain on the resources of developing countries, reducing tax revenues, exacerbating poverty and inequality, and undermining sustainable development. His Government, in partnership with Norway and other development partners, had held a number of conferences and side events on the subject. One effective deterrent was the recovery and return of stolen funds and assets

to countries of origin, and Nigeria would seek the commitment of Member States to update and implement the corresponding General Assembly resolution.

28. Despite rapid growth in information and communications technologies, the digital divide remained a real challenge to the implementation of outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society, and developing and least developed countries continued to lag in broadband access and use. Nigeria also expressed deep concern about the impact of the current asymmetric global environment on the efforts of developing and least developed countries to implement the 2030 Agenda, and called for serious attention to be paid to difficult macroeconomic conditions and the effects of natural disasters, climate change, environmental degradation, humanitarian crises and conflicts. Concrete and immediate action was needed to create the necessary enabling environment at all levels for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

29. **Mr. Binmubarak** (Yemen) said that conflict particularly affected countries in the Middle East. Consequently, ambitious programmes adopted in 2015 were more important than ever and must be accompanied by humanitarian assistance in emergencies. To implement the 2030 Agenda, it was necessary to achieve peace and stability to support countries in conflict or post-conflict situations, including some least developed countries. There could be no peace without development and no development without peace.

30. The coup d'état against the legitimate Government had resulted in poorer living conditions and the spread of disease. In cooperation with the Security Council and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, his Government was working to persuade coup groups to participate in the peace process and implement the necessary resolutions with the aim of progressing from humanitarian assistance to reconstruction. It was working with donors including the World Bank and the Arab Alliance on a comprehensive reconstruction plan fostering increased international assistance and incorporating implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

31. Yemen's expanded use of renewable energy had unfortunately resulted from the shutdown of its electricity grid, a lack of fuel and damage to the national network. His Government had prioritized the energy sector in sustainable development efforts, and would formulate a plan to combat climate change and support the agricultural sector. Yemen had experienced earthquakes and floods, and a hurricane was currently bearing down on its coasts. He called on all Member States to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protect the environment. His Government supported the Secretary-General's initiative to reform the United Nations development system, which was necessary to avoid overlap and duplication between funds and programmes.

32. **Ms. Quiel Murcia** (Panama) said that multilateral cooperation, involving not only economic resources, but also the transfer of capacities and best practices, was vital to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. The challenges faced by middle-income countries like Panama must be addressed. Metrics beyond income thresholds must be devised that reflected the multidimensional nature of poverty and development. Financing the 2030 Agenda still presented challenges for developing countries, particularly in harmonizing a consistent framework that coordinated actors, instruments and finance. Private sector activities including direct foreign investment could contribute to the achievement of the Goals by creating employment, providing goods and services, and generating tax revenue, all of which helped fund infrastructure and essential services.

33. It was important to reaffirm the commitment to combat illicit financial flows, which limited the ability to fund development, and to enhance international financial transparency and tax cooperation. The participation of developing countries in discussions on global economic governance was crucial to guarantee respect for sovereignty, diversity and development. New technologies and financial inclusion were powerful tools that could enhance equitable access to funding and help achieve the Goals.

34. Time was running out to implement the major agendas. United Nations system support was key to helping developing countries eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development, and in particular to assisting middle-income countries in facing their specific challenges. The repositioning of the United Nations development system would facilitate the strengthening of South-South cooperation. As an important regional venue for the revitalization of the resident coordinator system, Panama reiterated its willingness to utilize its bridging role in maximizing the transfer of knowledge and best practices for sustainable development.

35. **Ms. Rosa Suazo** (Honduras) said that climate change, growing inequality, persistent poverty and hunger, accelerated urbanization and environmental degradation were challenges facing developing and middle-income countries which must be considered in substantive discussions concerning the implementation and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda. A holistic approach

was needed for transition towards sustainable and resilient societies that ensured responsible management of finite natural resources and the fundamental human right of access to basic services. It was a matter of concern that access to concessional finance declined as the income of countries increased, leaving middle-income countries and others with ever-decreasing access to affordable financing in the face of greater demands and new development challenges.

36. The current classification model reduced poverty and development progress to a single variable which was inconsistent with the more complex economic and social reality and overlooked hard-won development achievements and growing inequality. Cooperation resources for development could not be appropriately prioritized, making assistance less effective. Multidimensional indicators were needed to measure diverse development realities and accurately channel resources. Social and economic policies were inextricably linked and must be refocused to eradicate poverty. Income inequality had fallen among countries, yet risen within countries. Continued insufficient investment, consumption and decent employment were eroding the right of all in democratic societies to share in progress and remained a major challenge.

37. Sustainable development would not be achieved without measures countering climate change and natural disasters, which had resulted in massive economic losses in 2017 and impacted public health, food and water security, and migration. Efforts that did not take account of climate change would undo the development gains of recent decades and endanger domestic stability and world peace.

38. While some forms of discrimination against women and girls were in decline, gender inequality continued to deprive women of rights and opportunities, and necessitated efforts to address unjust social attitudes and develop progressive legal frameworks. The reform of the United Nations development system was essential in order to reinforce its relevance and its ability to effectively achieve the Goals.

39. **Mr. Duque Estrada Meyer** (Brazil) said that the search for consensus in the Committee should never serve the cause of unilateralism. A multilateral dynamic in negotiations should be preserved, with all participants contributing to the benefit of the whole. Collective efforts on the 2030 Agenda must now build on the outcomes arising from the high-level political forum on sustainable development and take into account the cross-cutting importance of discussions on the means of implementation. The Committee should have a decisive role in advancing concrete development financing options.

40. The importance of ensuring adequate flows of international development cooperation could not be overstated. ODA commitments must be met, and greater domestic resource mobilization in developing countries also warranted closer attention. The 2030 Agenda was a common endeavour and entailed responsibilities for many actors, including the private sector and civil society. Engagement of private partners to advance development should be based on transparency and accountability. Further action was needed to reform global governance, make international institutions more representative and increase the participation of developing countries in global decision-making.

41. Welcoming the efforts to reform the United Nations development system, he stressed that national Governments must be consulted at all stages of the elaboration, execution and evaluation of United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks. The separation of functions between the resident coordinator and the resident representative could improve interagency collaboration, enhance efficiency and ensure increased spending on implementation of development activities; at the same time, however, the impact on the work of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies should be borne in mind. Core resources were the bedrock of operational activities for development and embodied North-South cooperation and respect for the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities; non-core resources were a complement to, not a substitute for, core resources. His delegation fully supported the findings and recommendations of the Open-ended Working Group established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 72/226.

42. *Ms. Alateibi (United Arab Emirates), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

43. **Ms. Siblini** (Lebanon) said that reform of the United Nations development system was needed to help developing countries and middle-income countries achieve the 2030 Agenda in accordance with national priorities. The United Nations had been an important partner in peacebuilding, development, humanitarian and peacekeeping activities in Lebanon for decades. Members of the Lebanese diaspora were continuing to make immense contributions to the economic and social development of both their home country, and their countries of destination, providing leverage for the Lebanese economy. Lebanon had actively engaged in negotiations on a global pact for safe orderly and regular migration to be adopted in December 2018.

44. In its first voluntary national review in July 2018, her Government had detailed progress on the 2030 Agenda in areas including health, education, women's empowerment, poverty eradication and small business support. Based on the principle of shared responsibility, Lebanon's development agenda would need to be financed through highly concessional lending and grants, mobilization of private sector resources, and increased support from the international community. Financing would also serve to upgrade infrastructure, which was overstretched by repercussions of the Syrian crisis and the influx of over 1.2 million displaced Syrians, compounding the economic, social, environmental and security challenges facing the country.

45. Lebanon was focused on improving its economy and the livelihoods of its citizens, achieving sustainable development and preserving its natural resources and cultural diversity. It had signed two agreements for offshore oil and gas exploration and production, with drilling slated to start in 2019. A new budget and government following elections in May 2018 had given fresh impetus to the growth and employment vision and prioritization of reforms. Her delegation would again be relying on international support for the adoption of the 2018 resolution entitled "Oil slick on Lebanese shores" calling on Israel to accept responsibility for prompt and adequate compensation to Lebanon for the costs of repairing the environmental damage caused by the 2006 oil spill.

46. **Mr. Ma** Zhaoxu (China) said that action was crucial to achieving the 2030 Agenda. The Committee should facilitate multilateral dialogue and consultations among all parties on an equal footing. It was important to focus on priority areas and on the quality of development. Member States should incorporate the Sustainable Development Goals into their national development strategies and jointly embark on an innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development path. The international community should prioritize development issues in its global macropolicy framework, focusing on areas including poverty reduction, infrastructure building, education and health, and provide technology transfer and capacity-building support to developing countries.

47. There was a need to deepen international development cooperation, optimize development partnership and ensure sufficient resources in order to address unbalanced and inadequate development in developing countries. Global development cooperation should be centred around the United Nations, with South-North cooperation as the main channel, supplemented by South-South cooperation. Developed countries should honour their ODA and climate finance commitments on time and support developing countries in pursuing a development path best suited to their own situations.

48. It was important to uphold multilateralism, as the bedrock for sustainable development. The World Trade Organization (WTO) rules were currently sustaining shocks and the multilateral trading system was being challenged. Firm commitment to multilateralism and opposition to unilateralism would affect the future development of all countries. All Governments should commit to the goal of cooperation for win-win results, based on rules and order, equity and justice, and maintain an international system centred on the United Nations and a multilateral trading system centred around WTO so as to strengthen global economic governance and create a favourable international environment for development.

49. During 40 years of reform and opening up, China had achieved annual economic growth of over 9 per cent and lifted 700 million people out of poverty — yet it remained a developing country. It had contributed to economic globalization by sharing its development opportunities and results with all countries. In recent years, it had contributed more than 30 per cent of worldwide economic growth. Through the Belt and Road initiative of President Xi Jinping, over 130 countries and international organizations had signed cooperation agreements with China; the second Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation would be held in 2019. China's first International Import Expo to be held in November 2018 was another initiative to open its markets to the world. No matter how the international situation evolved, China would never close up or retreat, but would open its doors even wider.

50. **Mr. Favre** (Switzerland) said that with just 12 years remaining to achieve the ambitious goals of the 2030 Agenda, the Committee must provide guidance on global sustainable development and related areas, and follow-up on global issues that did not have their own follow-up process. Efficient procedures were needed, and duplication must be avoided within and beyond the Committee. The Committee should only discuss matters that were clearly within its jurisdiction and were relevant to the major concerns of the twenty-first century; at the same time, the number of resolutions must be limited, as many of them were relics from the past. Regrettably, the Committee had often found it impossible to reach consensus during the previous session, a trend which was all the more concerning when the disagreements related to issues beyond the Committee's jurisdiction or not crucial to the

resolutions. Switzerland called for a culture of negotiation based on compromise and consensus.

51. At the current session, the first session since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 72/279, it was important for the Committee's work to be inspired by the reform process and for draft resolutions to be adopted to act as guidelines for implementation of that process.

52. **Mr. Annakou** (Libya) said that development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals were being impeded in developing countries by challenges such as conflict, slow economic growth and high unemployment among young people, who constituted the majority of the work force. Achieving the three pillars of sustainable development required strenuous, concerted effort by all countries. His delegation supported the Secretary-General's repositioning of the United Nations development system, which should focus particularly on helping conflict and post-conflict countries including Libya to work towards security, stability and reconstruction.

53. Reforming the development system to facilitate achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals required a progression from crisis management to crisis prevention. Shortcomings needed to be addressed in the response to conflict-related humanitarian disasters such as forced displacement, famine and human rights violations. An integrated approach needed to be taken to implementation of the Goals, without duplication of effort, overstretching of resources or overlaps in funds and agencies. Separating the functions of the resident representative and the resident coordinator was crucial to ensuring impartiality of coordination and monitoring at the country team level.

54. Unable to control its borders, Libya suffered from instability due to illegal migration, organized crime and human trafficking. Migration was a multifaceted international problem whose burden should not rest solely on transit countries. It was necessary to address the root causes, promote development in countries of origin, and combat organized crime gangs in countries of origin and destination. Countries that operated as safe havens for funds from illicit financial flows, from which Libya also suffered, must immediately end that practice and assist countries of origin in recovering their assets. Libya was relying on the United Nations system and specialized agencies, the World Bank and IMF to develop a mechanism for addressing illicit financial flows and asset recovery to which developing and developed countries would be committed.

55. **Ms. Tshering** (Bhutan) said that the challenges facing multilateralism brought with them greater opportunities for achieving a safer, happier and more prosperous world. As a small developing country, Bhutan appreciated the Secretary-General's initiative for reform of the United Nations development system, which was the key to an Organization fit for purpose and better able to fulfil the 2030 Agenda, and looked forward to full operationalization of the reinvigorated resident coordinator system, which would provide essential strategic support to programme countries, particularly those in special situations, in implementing the 2030 Agenda.

56. She hoped that her Government's contribution to the voluntary trust fund would encourage others to support the fund. Basing development on the concept of Gross National Happiness, which was premised on the well-being of the population, Bhutan had presented a voluntary national review in July 2018, and looked forward to exploring partnerships to strengthen delivery of sustainable development.

57. 2018 had seen the highest number of least developed countries qualifying for graduation, which was an indication of success of the international community, in partnership with national Governments, in bringing about sustainable development in the most vulnerable countries. She called on the international community to continue supporting countries that were transitioning towards graduation, while bearing in mind that graduation must be sustainable, and should not set in motion a reversal of past development achievements. Her delegation looked forward to the General Assembly's endorsement of the decision of the Economic and Social Council concerning Bhutan's graduation of Bhutan in 2023.

58. On the environmental pillar of sustainable development, Bhutan urged all States to heed the unequivocal message from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change stressing the urgent but achievable need to avoid exceeding global warming of 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.

59. Fair and effective governance was critical in ensuring development benefits for people and the planet. Empowering the public to participate effectively in decision-making was crucial. The third parliamentary elections since the introduction of democracy in 2008 were underway in Bhutan, with primary round voter turnout at over 65 per cent, an increase of 11 percent compared with 2013. More Bhutanese women than men had exercised their right to vote. Her Government was confident that the political transition in Bhutan would be a smooth and seamless process.

60. **Mr. Poudyal** (Nepal) said that implementation of the 2030 Agenda was slow, casting doubt on the

achievement of the Goals. Leaving no one behind was not possible while millions of people remained in poverty, which, together with hunger, illiteracy and exclusion, bred anger, conflicts, instability and terrorism. Inclusive implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals should be pursued with national ownership and leadership as well as robust international partnership. Least developed countries, land-locked developing countries and small island developing States required immediate attention.

61. Nepal attached great importance to the United Nations development system reform, and was confident that the reinvigorated resident coordinator system would better serve Member States in implementing the 2030 Agenda. At the same time, it was important to respect national policy space, leadership and ownership. The benefits of globalization were not being shared equitably. Despite continued global economic growth, a lack of inclusion, equity and social justice left many people marginalized and deprived. That unsustainable trend was likely to be exacerbated by the technological revolution creating a large segment of "irrelevant people", a situation that was morally hollow, economically inefficient and socially destabilizing.

62. Mountain countries and small island countries faced an existential threat from climate change, for which they bore the brunt despite contributing the least. A coordinated, robust and just response was needed that respected the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. The Paris Agreement must be implemented in full, and international cooperation for adaptation and mitigation ensured through more accessible climate finance for the neediest countries. His Government was committed to socioeconomic transformation and sustained peace and stability and accorded priority to implementation of the 2030 Agenda, which was integral to Nepal's graduation from the least developed countries category.

63. **Mr. Inguanez** (Malta) said that the ambitious 2030 Agenda had the potential to drastically improve the lives of all citizens of the world while safeguarding the planet's future; national ownership was key to its full and effective implementation. In Malta, a 2012 act affirmed the mainstreaming of sustainable development across government, and a new strategy was being devised to set out the development path to 2050. The Sustainable Development Policy was being aligned with the 2030 Agenda to better address future challenges and opportunities and formulate a clear direction for long-term maximization of the three pillars of sustainable development.

64. Malta had presented its first voluntary national review in 2018, outlining policies and initiatives that had been helping to attain the Goals and had resulted in one of the lowest unemployment rates in Europe. Growth in the real gross domestic product (GDP) and employment was forecast to remain strong, and the Europe 2020 target of 70 per cent employment had already been attained. Employment opportunities coupled with support structures and financial incentives had increased the number of people entering or re-entering the labour market.

65. By fostering economic growth, international trade helped address poverty reduction, food security, job creation, gender equality and environmental sustainability. It was time to devise trade and development policies at the global level to allow for fairer and more equitable participation by ensuring the appropriate use of competitive advantages. Governments needed to promote responsible business conduct, as global value chains represented the bulk of trade flows. Sustainable development was key to Malta's long-term prosperity. An island with limited natural resources, Malta needed smart strategies to maximize its potential while preserving the natural habitat; his Government would continue its work towards the gradual implementation of 2030 Agenda at the national level.

66. **Mr. Gonzalez** (Colombia) said that his Government continued to attach priority to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda; it believed that the only way to achieve equity was to step up efforts to achieve sustainable development, with the involvement of civil society and the private and social sectors, among other stakeholders. The environment was a focus of strategies to transform consumption and production models for the benefit of future generations.

67. His Government was committed to biodiversity protection, renewable energy, climate action and environmental education, and was seeking to align productivity with conservation. In order to combat climate change, it was essential to focus on solutions and to take urgent action to meet the targets of the Paris Agreement. Priority should be accorded to the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The need for increased mobilization and faster operationalization of internal and external resources to achieve full implementation of the 2030 Agenda was of the utmost importance to Colombia as a middle-income Latin American country.

68. His Government also accorded priority to entrepreneurship, as part of an economic recovery programme that recognized businesses of all sizes as

strategic development partners. It believed that private-sector bottlenecks must be eliminated to enhance the country's competitiveness. The orange economy was linking cultural heritage with sustainable tourism that was developing rapidly alongside peacebuilding and was boosting employment and foreign exchange earnings. Colombia was also committed to updating its information and communications technologies by generating investment, preparing for the fifth generation of cellular mobile communications and increasing bandwidth.

69. Science, technology, innovation and sustainable development were closely linked. His Government prioritized areas including technology transfer under favourable conditions, research and development, and cooperation on technical, tax and commercial matters. Poverty eradication was the greatest obstacle to sustainable development, and called for cooperation among States, the United Nations system, academia, civil society and other stakeholders.

70. **Ms. Eckels-Currie** (United States of America) said that the Committee had become weighed down by stale debates informed by long-discredited ideologies and narrow interests, with far too little attention being paid to the true drivers of sustainable development such as the rule of law, human rights, good governance, women's empowerment, and the participation of civil society and the private sector. The incorporation of language targeting a domestic political audience into multilateral documents was a blatant misuse of such documents that should not be supported. A number of resolutions could benefit from biennialization or triennialization if Member States would exercise the necessary self-discipline. Limited resources should not be wasted on outdated, irrelevant and ineffective resolutions. The Committee's work should be conducted on time, during normal business hours, by enforcing clear deadlines.

71. At the current session, her delegation was again prepared to call for votes on resolutions dealing with sensitive trade matters; her Government sought fair and reciprocal trade, open investment environments, transparent agreements between nations, and improved connectivity. The United States enjoyed strong and growing trade relationships across the globe and welcomed efforts to bolster those relationships; however, it would act in its sovereign interest, and would not take trade policy direction from the United Nations. The United Nations must respect the independent mandates of other processes and institutions, including trade negotiations, and not involve itself in decisions and actions in other forums such as WTO. There should be no expectation that the United States would heed decisions by the Economic and Social Council or the General Assembly on such issues, including initiatives that undermined incentives for innovation, such as calls for technology transfer that was not voluntary and on mutually agreed terms.

72. The United States was the world's largest provider of ODA. However, the scale and impact of private capital, domestic resource mobilization, philanthropy, remittances and other financial flows, and enhanced commerce and investment, dwarfed the role of ODA in development finance and could increase the self-reliance of developing countries. When investing in developing countries, her Government sought to ensure that its work did not displace the private sector or subsidize projects that should find their own financing, and that its investments upheld the highest standards of governance and environmental, social and labour rights. Her Government had recently signed into law the Better Utilization of Investments Leading to Development (BUILD) Act, establishing a reformed, modern development finance institution, the United States International Development Finance Corporation.

73. The private sector was a driver and sustainer of development; its role within the United Nations should be re-envisioned accordingly. The United Nations should embrace working with the private sector and make it easier to forge partnerships with commercial firms all over the world. It also needed to support the vital role of women in sustainable economic growth and make sure that they had every opportunity to earn their way to economic leadership roles and participate in the global economy. Closing the global gender gap in labour markets could increase worldwide GDP by as much as $28 trillion by 2025. The United States had recently launched the 2X Global Women's Initiative, which would mobilize more than $1 billion from the private sector to projects that supported women in developing countries.

74. **Mr. Suárez Moreno** (Venezuela) said that the 2030 Agenda was being implemented in the midst of global uncertainty. Venezuela strongly supported multilateralism. Member States needed to work together to prevent the goals of the 2030 Agenda from being undermined through restrictions and conditionalities of the means of implementation. Despite difficulties, his Government had strengthened cooperation mechanisms with the United Nations through projects and programmes that combined the three pillars of sustainable development with national plans and policies.

75. Sovereign management of natural resources was an important means of leveraging economic and social

development. Venezuela rejected the unilateral promulgation and implementation of economic, financial or commercial measures that restricted the right of self-determination, violated sovereignty, and were incompatible with the Charter of the United Nations and international law. Unilateral measures, such as those which had been applied against Venezuela and other countries of the South, impeded normal political, economic, social and cultural development and had an adverse impact on human rights.

76. A fair multilateral trading system based on special and differential treatment was needed, incorporating the principles of solidarity, cooperation, complementarity and respect for sovereignty. International development cooperation must be based on national priorities, strategies and development plans. Member States still had key responsibility for formulating policies and defining development priorities. Corporate interests must not be promoted to the detriment of populations. Developed countries needed to meet their ODA commitments as a matter of urgency. His delegation reiterated the importance of South-South cooperation, as a complement to, and not a substitute for, North-South cooperation.

77. A radical change in production and consumption patterns, particularly in developed countries, was needed to address climate change, which was expected to intensify, resulting in widespread damage and disease, and a need for increased international aid to countries affected. Venezuela had ratified the Paris Agreement and reaffirmed its commitment to efforts to combat global warming.

78. **Mr. Al Habib** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that eradicating poverty was the immediate priority in achieving sustainable development and required an environment that facilitated the necessary means of implementation in developing countries. Those countries continued to face enormous challenges that were partly rooted in global economic, financial and trade imbalances, as well as poverty and inequality. A universal, rules-based, open, non-discriminatory, depoliticized and equitable multilateral trading system was an indispensable requirement for sustained economic growth and sustainable development.

79. Multilateralism offered the possibility of addressing the complex challenges faced by a growing number of countries through collective action. The very existence of the United Nations, and of its development system, was proof that multilateralism worked. The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action signed with the Islamic Republic of Iran was a concrete example of a successful multilateral solution of global issues. Unilateralism, and the imposition of laws and regulations with extraterritorial impact against developing countries, not only undermined the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations but also adversely affected the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

80. Development should be at the centre of the work of the United Nations. The operational activities for development should support the achievement of the Goals by strengthening national capacities in developing countries based on national development needs, priorities and plans. Reform of the United Nations development system, including the reinvigorated resident coordinator system, should result in systemic and enhanced oversight and monitoring.

81. Developed countries must fully honour their commitments to developing countries, including the transfer of required technologies and investment. A majority of the population in developing countries were young people, whose potential could be tapped through visionary policies at the national level and a conducive international environment to contribute significantly to economic prosperity and social development.

82. Since the victory of the Islamic Revolution, a robust legal framework had been created in the Islamic Republic of Iran, providing a stable platform for national development policies, particularly for poverty eradication. Significant achievements had been made despite external challenges ranging from eight years of imposed war and the 30-year-long hosting of 3 million refugees to unfair restrictions and unilateral sanctions. Wars and domestic conflicts in West Asia forced millions of people into abject poverty, whose eradication was essential for regional stability and prosperity. The region also suffered from environmental issues including sand and dust storms, whose challenges and solutions had been discussed at the high-level interactive dialogue held in July 2018.

83. **Mr. Phansourivong** (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that the 3 per cent growth in the world economy in 2017 had been unequally distributed, especially among least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, which required higher investment to meet their development needs and support implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

84. With a view to poverty eradication, the overarching goal of the 2030 Agenda and an indispensable requirement for achieving the Goals, the Lao People's Democratic Republic had mainstreamed the global development agendas in its current five-year national socioeconomic development plan. Public

financial management and revenue collection had also been strengthened to enhance domestic resource mobilization, and his Government had adopted a national sustainable development goal to address the problem of unexploded ordnance.

85. The United Nations needed to be made fit for purpose in order to respond effectively to modern challenges. His delegation supported the Secretary-General's reform initiative. The Organization and Member States must continue to prioritize development while promoting international peace, security and human rights. He expressed concerned at the decline in contributions to core funding for United Nations agencies, which would affect development programmes on the ground if it continued, and called on countries to fulfil their ODA commitments.

86. **Mr. Nakano** (Japan), expressing condolences to Indonesia for the devastation wrought by the recent earthquake and tsunami, said that the Committee needed to keep up with the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and should avoid reopening issues agreed upon in 2015, such as the Sustainable Development Goals or the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Based on the concept of human security, Japan was focusing its efforts on areas such as health, education, disaster risk reduction and gender equality. The Goals could not be achieved without the participation of the private sector or the effective use of science, technology and innovation. With regard to financial discipline, his delegation reiterated its position that unnecessary programme budget implications would be unacceptable.

87. As a co-facilitator of the recent high-level meeting on the fight against tuberculosis, Japan had helped bring about a unanimously endorsed political declaration on ending the disease. Half of the world's population currently lacked access to basic medical services, making it essential for every country to achieve universal health coverage. Japan was committed to mainstreaming disaster risk reduction as an integral part of the sustainable development agenda and sought to expedite full implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. Climate change had manifested more rapidly than expected, and all countries must engage with the same urgency. Japan strongly supported the Secretary-General's decision to convene the 2019 Climate Summit for full implementation of the Paris Agreement from 2020.

88. It was obvious that the Sustainable Development Goals could not be achieved without the active involvement of the private sector. His country would pursue deeper private sector engagement through negotiation of the agenda on global partnership, and highlighted the activities of the United Nations Global Compact and the International Chamber of Commerce. With a firm belief in the role of science, technology and innovation in achieving the sustainable development agenda, Japan had co-chaired the third annual Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the Sustainable Development Goals in 2018.

89. **Mr. Beleffi** (San Marino) said that the United Nations should increase its leadership role in global governance because of its deeply democratic nature, universal participation and undisputed legitimacy. Trust, inclusiveness and dialogue were essential to support multilateralism and its ability to produce concrete results at the global level.

90. In combination with the Paris Agreement, the 2030 Agenda was essential for building inclusive, resilient and peaceful societies and defining the vision of a safe society in which poverty had been eliminated, prosperity was shared and decent work was available. The eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions was the most difficult and important obstacle to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The 2030 Agenda emphasized universal respect for human rights and human dignity. Peace, justice, equality and non-discrimination were fundamental rights, the implementation of which was crucial for creating inclusive societies. While some progress had been made, there were marked inequalities both among and within countries in the implementation of the Agenda, which was the responsibility of individual States.

91. **Mr. Yaakob** (Malaysia) said that notable progress had been made in his country's economy, whose performance had been described by IMF as strong in 2018, with growth predictions of around 4.5 per cent for the next two years and potential qualification as a high-income nation by 2020. Nevertheless, his Government remained concerned about heightened volatility in the global economic and financial situation and urged all Member States to strengthen international financial regulations, ensure effective fiscal measures and help restore market confidence in order to stabilize financial markets and promote global economic growth; it also called for enhanced bilateral and regional cooperation and stood ready to explore options for advancing economic growth with all stakeholders.

92. Malaysia was on track to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. A five-year plan for 2016–2020 and a roadmap outlined the directions and specific national actions for achieving the Goals. His Government supported the Secretary-General's

initiative to reform the United Nations development system, including enhanced engagement with host Governments in mobilizing development activities, and hoped that the repositioning of the development system would help developing countries achieve the Goals while respecting national ownership and leadership.

93. As the host of the ninth World Urban Forum in February 2018, Malaysia welcomed the adoption of the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Cities 2030. His Government reiterated its support for South-South Cooperation as a vital element of international cooperation for development, and was continuing to engage developing nations by sharing its developmental experiences and expertise through the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme.

94. **Mr. Meza-Cuadra** (Peru) said that the Sustainable Development Goals had been incorporated into Peru's national development plans, prioritizing the eradication of poverty in all its forms, the strengthening of institutions, the rule of law and democratic governance. His Government also attached priority to reducing vulnerability to climate change and promoting low-emission development. It had passed a framework climate change law and a gender and climate change action plan.

95. His Government highlighted the importance of strengthening the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030. The latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warned of much graver immediate climate change consequences than previously anticipated, requiring transformation of the global economy at an unprecedented speed and scale. Governments had a moral obligation to protect the planet for future generations and guarantee the right to a healthy environment.

96. His Government supported the Secretary-General's reform initiative for the United Nations development system. The outcome of the 2018 ECOSOC Forum on Financing for Development follow-up would inform a substantive discussion on implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. International trade facilitated wealth generation, poverty reduction and progress on sustainable development. WTO had an important role in guaranteeing stability, predictability and transparency in the multilateral trading system. Openness, international cooperation, multilateralism and United Nations support were more relevant than ever in addressing global challenges that were undermining the potential for development.

97. *Mr. Skinner-Klée Arenales (Guatemala) resumed the Chair.*

98. **Mr. Djani** (Indonesia) said that the United Nations could overcome global challenges to achieve lasting peace and fair and sustainable prosperity. Despite encouraging progress on some Sustainable Development Goals since their adoption in 2015, others were not on target, and some gains had been reversed. A high concentration of the poor still lived in many developing countries, and inequality was increasing. Addressing global warming and population growth would require sustained commitment beyond political cycles.

99. Disasters were reversing development gains in parts of the world. In that regard, Indonesia was deeply appreciative of the international assistance received following the earthquake and tsunami in Palu and Donggala; the country was still in recovery and would continue reconstruction to return life to normal in Palu. The Committee must enhance collaboration and partnership and take bold action to achieve the Goals in a timely manner, focusing on pockets of poverty and promoting upward mobility. People must be empowered by facilitating economic opportunities and financial accessibility, including innovative and creative support for micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, women, youth and vulnerable people.

100. Indonesia was promoting the creative economy as a means to economic recovery, growth and resilience. Connectivity between rural and urban areas should be promoted, provision for health, education and water expanded, and an enabling environment for sustainable development ensured to increase international trade as an engine for development. Markets must be opened, protectionism avoided, and the multilateral trading system strengthened. The specific needs of countries in special situations needed to be addressed.

101. Countries must prepare for a rapidly changing landscape. Technologies should be utilized for development, and safeguards put in place to mitigate the dark side of technological advances. New challenges and opportunities such as the blue ocean economy should be addressed. Full, effective and timely implementation of United Nations development activities should be ensured, and the system must be repositioned so that it was fit for purpose and value for money. The only way to solve the problems facing the world was to strengthen multilateralism, which was not a zero-sum game but a win-win solution for all.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.

United Nations A/C.2/73/SR.5

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Second Committee

Summary record of the 5th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 9 October 2018, at 3 p.m.

Chair:	Mr. Skinner-Klée Arenales	(Guatemala)
later:	Mr. Remaoun (Vice-Chair)	(Algeria)
later:	Mr. Skinner-Klée Arenales (Chair)	(Guatemala)

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General debate (*continued*)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

General debate (*continued*)

1. **Mr. Amde** (Ethiopia) said that three years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, poverty, hunger, inequality, armed conflict, climate change and humanitarian disasters persisted. He urged Member States to renew their collective commitment to achieving people-centred, planet-friendly, inclusive and sustainable growth for all. Multi-stakeholder collaboration was not an option, but a necessity. Multilateralism was what had produced the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. Further bold and coordinated action was needed to advance the path of development, fight the adverse impacts of climate change, and mobilize adequate resources. Financial and technological support for developing countries was the litmus test for commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals; the developed countries should honour their commitment to provide it.

2. While Ethiopia had registered high economic growth since 2015, poverty, unemployment, poor governance, sluggish exports and debt remained obstacles to its achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. His Government was undertaking a number of economic reforms that it hoped would lead to poverty reduction, job creation and the transfer of capital and technology. Over 60 per cent of the national budget had been allocated to pro-poor sectors. Least developed countries such as his needed an international environment that enabled national efforts to reduce poverty through economic reform and diversification; structural transformation alone would not suffice. He urged development partners to demonstrate global solidarity by fulfilling their commitments to the most vulnerable countries.

3. **Mr. Peketi** (Togo) said that persistent poverty and youth unemployment were fuelling migration. Climate change was creating more and more catastrophic events and should be addressed by coordinated action within the framework of the Paris Agreement. In that connection, his delegation expressed its sympathy to Indonesia, which had been struck by a devastating earthquake and tsunami two weeks earlier, and to Haiti, which had just suffered another earthquake. Hunger was virtually endemic across Africa, but particularly in South Sudan, Somalia and Yemen, while drought was a problem in many developing countries. The Committee needed to fulfil its mandate by addressing the issues of food security, the environment and poverty, including extreme poverty. He hoped its deliberations would be open, inclusive and constructive and lead to strengthened international cooperation, the promotion of diversified partnerships, and accelerated achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Financing for development was crucial; he urged all stakeholders to fulfil their commitments under the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

4. His delegation welcomed the adoption of General Assembly resolution 72/279 on the repositioning of the United Nations development system in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system. Togo had presented voluntary national reviews in the high-level political forum on sustainable development three years in a row, most recently in July 2018. He urged the Committee to pay special attention to the most vulnerable countries, particularly in Africa, including the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States, as well as countries in post-conflict situations and middle-income countries. Every country had the right to enjoy sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth; dialogue and consensus should prevail in the Committee's deliberations on how to change the world for the better.

5. **Mr. Kim** Song (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that the Sustainable Development Goals could only be achieved by consolidated international action. Unfortunately, implementation was being impeded by unilateral approaches. In particular, international peace and security, which were crucial to implementing the Goals, were being undermined by the high-handedness of certain States. Even so, his country had led the way in dramatically reducing tensions in the Korean peninsula, one of the world's hot spots, thereby promoting a regional environment conducive to development and prosperity. His people were concentrating their collective efforts on building a self-reliant and civilized society within a socialist economic construction that was fully in line with the 2030 Agenda.

6. Unfortunately, his country's development efforts were facing unfair obstacles in the form of United Nations Security Council sanctions that blocked access to humanitarian needs, including medicines, medical equipment and even sports equipment. He invited Member States to join with his country in creating a new international economic order that was just, equal and impartial and would pave the way for achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

7. **Mr. Braquetti** (Monaco) said that the international economic and industrial systems were having alarming effects on the environment. Resources were becoming scarcer, and the full effect of pollution on human health was as yet unknown. It was no longer possible to prevent climate change, only to slow it. His delegation welcomed the Secretary-General's recent announcement of a climate summit to be convened in September 2019.

8. Monaco had made numerous strides towards a green economy, with advances in urban planning, transportation, resource conservation, water management and green spaces. The national energy sector looked forward to achieving carbon neutrality by 2050. Monaco Heliport had just been certified as the world's first carbon-accredited heliport by Airports Council International. His country had also just unveiled the world's first nationwide 5G mobile network and was promoting connectivity under its "smart nation" programme.

9. Monaco honoured its commitments regarding the provision of official development assistance (ODA) and had made a voluntary contribution to the Joint Fund for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Addis Ababa Action Agenda had put forth a sweeping vision of development, including its environmental component, which should be incorporated into public policy; the private sector, in all its diversity, should be made a fully-fledged actor in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. In that regard, he welcomed the second One Planet Summit that had just been held on the on the margins of the high-level meetings of the current General Assembly session.

10. **Mr. Rodrigo** (Sri Lanka) said that the incorporation of the 2030 Agenda into the national development plan was beginning to bear fruit. *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2018* had recorded declines in extreme poverty and unemployment, and gains in the areas of health, environmental protection and productivity. However, hunger was on the rise, gender inequality persisted, and many people still lacked access to safe drinking water and sanitation. Climate change and conflict continued to pose threats.

11. His Government had created a separate Ministry for Sustainable Development and a parliamentary committee on the Sustainable Development Goals. Both its Vision 2025 strategy and its Public Investment Programme 2017–2020 were aligned with the 2030 Agenda. Sri Lanka had just presented its voluntary national review at the most recent session of the high-level political forum. Its Ministry of Education had collaborated with United Nations agencies in a national campaign to support student-led initiatives for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. While Sri Lanka was committed to the Goals and had made considerable progress, it continued to face challenges posed by dependence on fossil fuels, degradation of forest and land resources, and the vulnerability of population centres to disasters.

12. **Ms. Nason** (Ireland) said that Second Committee deliberations were an annual test of the capacity of Member States to walk in each other's shoes. She hoped that discussions in the current session would produce genuinely multilateral and results-based resolutions that focused on the core goals of eradicating poverty and hunger and achieving sustainable and inclusive growth. With the 2030 deadline for achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals fast approaching, the international community needed to act with urgency to achieve a world free of poverty and deprivation that respected the limits of nature.

13. Along with Kenya, Ireland had co-facilitated the negotiations leading to the adoption of the 2030 Agenda in 2015. Her delegation supported the Secretary-General's efforts to address development financing issues. Her country remained committed to the target of earmarking 0.7 per cent of gross national income for official development assistance and had just pledged more than a million dollars in support of the reform of the United Nations development system. She wished to draw particular attention to the problems faced by small island developing states, landlocked developing countries and least developed countries.

14. As a nation of migrants, Ireland viewed migration as a natural feature of human societies, even if others did not. Her delegation was proud to have co-facilitated the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants along with the delegation of Jordan. Her country would participate actively in the Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration scheduled to take place in Marrakesh in December 2018. As Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women, her country was also working to advance gender equality, which was not a gift to be granted but a fundamental driver for improving the lives of all. Her delegation was also honoured to have been asked to co-facilitate the consultative process for the political declaration adopted at the Nelson Mandela Peace Summit. She urged Member States to renew their efforts towards realizing Mr. Mandela's vision of a culture of peace, tolerance and respect for human dignity.

15. **Mr. Hilale** (Morocco) said that as the reform of the United Nations development system progressed, it would be important to correct the imbalance between core and non-core resources. He stressed that ODA should be the main catalyst for the 2030 Agenda, in combination with public-private partnerships and innovative financing. That would ensure development financing that was both predictable and flexible. Recently published figures on global warming and malnutrition had highlighted the threats posed by climate change and conflict, particularly in Africa, and the need to build up the resilience of the most vulnerable countries. As the Vice-Chair of the Economic and Social Council charged with chairing the humanitarian affairs segment, Morocco was committed to strengthening synergies between the development and humanitarian segments.

16. His country was about to hold its second national consultation on the Sustainable Development Goals, in order to begin preparing another voluntary national review for presentation in the high-level political forum. According to the 2018 *Sustainable Development Goals Index and Dashboards Report*, published by the Sustainable Development Goals Centre for Africa, Morocco led the African continent with a 66.1 per cent achievement rate for the Sustainable Development Goals. It had adopted a people-centred approach to development that respected the natural environment and cultural heritage. During the current session, his delegation would once again be sponsoring the biennial draft resolution on the promotion of sustainable tourism, including ecotourism, for poverty eradication and environment protection.

17. Morocco looked forward to hosting the Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration in Marrakesh in December 2018. The Conference would offer an opportunity to improve migration governance, address the challenges associated with the new migration patterns, and harness the contributions of migrants to development. He also expressed support for the Secretary-General's appointment of a High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation. The first African consultations in that process would be held in Morocco.

18. His country had recognized early on that climate change was a "threat multiplier", and had put in place a number of national strategies to address it. The first ever Africa Action Summit on climate change and development had taken place in Marrakesh in 2016, on the margins of the twenty-second session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and had given rise to a number of initiatives, most notably the Congo Basin Climate Commission and the Blue Fund for the Congo Basin. The rational management of water resources was a high priority for Morocco, which was investing in large-scale irrigation projects and had passed legislation providing for decentralized and participatory water resources management. He expressed support for the International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018–2028, and reiterated his country's commitment to South-South cooperation as a vehicle for the emergence of a new Africa, confident in its potential and open to the future. Over the past 15 years, Morocco had signed some 1,000 cooperation agreements with 28 African countries on issues ranging from education to health, infrastructure and agriculture.

19. **Mr. Rakhmetov** (Kazakhstan) said that the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement provided clear guidelines and innovative ideas for making full use of best practices at the national, regional and global levels. It was now urgent to fully unlock the Committee's potential to be pragmatic and results-oriented.

20. Kazakhstan believed that the Paris Agreement was the cornerstone of global efforts to overcome climate challenges and fulfil the 2030 Agenda. It looked forward to the climate change summit to be convened in 2019. The collective commitment to fully implementing that agreement in a timely manner should be reaffirmed. As the world's largest landlocked developing country, Kazakhstan had always been at the forefront of addressing the geographical disadvantages faced by those countries.

21. It was clear that all 17 Sustainable Development Goals had a direct bearing on the future of landlocked developing countries and underpinned trade-related and infrastructure capacity-building, as well as the promotion of regional economic cooperation and connectivity. The ambitious current phase of the Vienna Programme of Action for Landlocked Developing Countries for the Decade 2014–2024 dovetailed with the 2030 Agenda. The 2019 midterm review of the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action would be instrumental to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals by landlocked developing countries.

22. Given the ongoing repositioning of the United Nations development system, regional initiatives such as the new generation of United Nations country teams headed by independent resident coordinators were becoming increasingly important. A new paradigm was needed to address the transnational challenges brought about by recent globalization trends. Meeting those

challenges, which were especially common in conflict-prone regions, would necessitate a transition from a country-specific to a regional strategy. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals required a holistic approach that incorporated the interests of all stakeholders. Kazakhstan firmly believed that the Economic and Social Council should retain its role as the central forum for discussion and coordination towards that end. Kazakhstan was a candidate for membership in the Council for the period 2022–2024.

23. As the past three years had shown that greater financial efforts were needed to assist low-income countries in meeting key targets of the Sustainable Development Goals, his delegation remained a strong advocate of the idea that Member States should contribute 1 per cent of their national military budget towards attaining the Goals.

24. Kazakhstan shared the sense of urgency expressed during the 2018 high-level political forum on sustainable development, a key platform for follow-up and review, and would be presenting its voluntary national review during the 2019 high-level political forum. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals would ensure a high quality of life for the people of Kazakhstan and would also be fully in line with its Strategy 2050 and other national development programmes. While there could be no one-size-fits-all approach to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, a common vision, mutual support, regular interaction and coordinated multilateral efforts would provide a powerful impetus towards a peaceful, equitable and sustainable global society.

25. **Ms. Popescu** (Romania) said that major international agreements such as the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement could only be realized through a strong and confident multilateral system that empowered Member States to reach their targets. Romania welcomed and supported the implementation of General Assembly resolution 72/279 on repositioning the United Nations development system in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, but remained concerned about insufficient development financing. Owing to the global economic slowdown, traditional funding remained lower than in previous years, while natural hazards had a heavy impact on small, vulnerable and highly-indebted economies. Romania welcomed and supported the Secretary-General's Strategy for financing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2018–2021); close cooperation among all developed and developing States, Governments and multi-stakeholders would be crucial to implementing the Agenda.

26. The primary focus in that process must be on poverty reduction and mobilizing resources to achieve food security and all the Sustainable Development Goals while leaving no one behind. Her Government had incorporated the core principles of the 2030 Agenda into its national development paradigm with a view to ensuring good governance and respect for the rule of law, human rights and gender mainstreaming. The presentation of its voluntary national review during the July 2018 high-level political forum had been a very useful exercise. Romania was committed to implementing the Paris Agreement, curbing climate change, combating pollution and protecting the environment against further degradation.

27. Continuous adaptation of policies and resources and attention to all individuals and communities, starting with the most vulnerable, were needed to bring about a sustainable and resilient society. In 2017, Romania had recorded an accelerated 6.9 per cent rate of economic growth driven by wage increases that had improved the population's purchasing power and by gross investments from the private sector. Potential growth in gross domestic product (GDP) had totalled around 5 per cent that year, largely driven by total factor productivity. As a result of infrastructure investment and favourable developments in machinery, transport investment and the labour force, a significant increase in capital stock was expected to generate an increase in real GDP growth in 2018.

28. Her Government also attached importance to health care and improving access to it in rural areas. It had implemented national health care policies and programmes targeting vulnerable groups and strengthened the health care system with a view to achieving universal coverage.

29. Education, one of the main cross-cutting areas of sustainable development, should not be centred exclusively on the environmental dimension. It should be informed by cooperation and partnership among a number of decision-makers: central and local authorities; education and research units; the health care system; the private sector, including the manufacturing, transport, agriculture and commerce sectors; labour unions; mass media; non-governmental organizations (NGOs); local communities; citizens; and international organizations.

30. Romania contributed to the fight against extreme poverty and supported the development of sustainable democratic institutions in developing countries, as well as building South-South and triangular cooperation

partnerships. It had been active bilaterally in the areas of international food safety and food processing standards, agricultural techniques, soil erosion techniques and desertification.

31. **Ms. Boham** (Ghana) said that her Government hoped that the Committee's work would galvanize support and maintain the momentum for national implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, which most developing countries were far from meeting. Despite the relative progress achieved, many countries were still affected by challenges such as unfair trade practices and the vagaries of the international economic system; low incomes and unemployment; and a lack of access to quality education, efficient energy sources, good health facilities and financing, while the effects of climate change continued to widen inequalities.

32. Her Government held the view that there were sufficient resources on the planet for all countries to achieve prosperity, and called for a reaffirmation of a rules-based multilateral trading system that facilitated trade and provided opportunities for developing countries to broaden their export base and stimulate economic growth. It was also necessary to promote an enabling environment that fostered job creation – especially for youth – bearing in mind the intrinsic link between youth and development. Given the size of their youth populations, African countries needed to include that segment in national development discussions if they intended to achieve the 2030 Agenda. Ghana had integrated all 17 Sustainable Development Goals into its national vision and budget and would be presenting its voluntary national review during the July 2019 high-level political forum.

33. In that regard, her delegation wished to emphasize the importance of sustainable industrial development, in line with industrial policies and institutional frameworks that were supported by investment in industrial infrastructure, clean technology, climate change adaptation, innovation, environmental technologies and skills development.

34. Ghana welcomed the implementation plan for the reinvigorated resident coordinator system. The system must remain focused on sustainable development while aiming to eradicate poverty, consistent with the integrated nature of the 2030 Agenda and in line with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF). She underscored the need for the adequate, predictable and sustainable funding of the resident coordinator system. Member States must voluntarily contribute to the Joint Fund for the 2030 Agenda to deliver a coherent, effective and accountable response that corresponded to national needs and priorities.

35. South-South cooperation was becoming increasingly critical to bolstering the productive capacities of developing countries and continued to have a positive impact on trade and financial flows, technological capabilities and economic growth. Ghana called on the Organization to facilitate such cooperation.

36. **Ms. Simonyan** (Armenia) said that inclusive, participatory policies for sustainable development would sustain peaceful societies where diversity was a source of strength. The efficiency of international development cooperation rested on the long-term sustainability of inclusive development. Mere generation of wealth without its equitable distribution would only lead to injustice and inequalities.

37. Her Government had been setting up institutional frameworks to ensure that its national priorities and strategies were in line with the Sustainable Development Goals. Ambitious reforms and the launch of a special partnership platform between her Government and the United Nations country team were designed to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda with a focus on the impact of innovation in advancing smart development. Indeed, in presenting its first voluntary national review during the July 2018 high-level political forum, Armenia had highlighted the role of partnerships for innovation in support of socially and environmentally impactful projects. As a side event at the high-level political forum, it had organized a high-level panel on the role of innovation and social enterprise, a follow-up to the Impact Investment for Development Summit it had hosted in 2017.

38. As reflected in its national strategies for sustainable development, her Government was determined to mainstream the Sustainable Development Goals into all areas of governance. In a peaceful transformation and change of government over the past year, Armenia had launched a comprehensive reform agenda focused on democratic governance. Having prioritized an innovation agenda, her Government was fully committed to creating and developing knowledge-based platforms that leveraged impact. She hoped that the Committee's deliberations would contribute to identifying new platforms and channels for partnerships and innovation in support of the Goals.

39. **Mr. Traore** (Senegal) said that the international community was struggling to fulfil the commitments made under Agenda 2030, the Addis Ababa Plan of Action and the Paris Agreement, given ongoing impediments such as a return to unilateralism, trade wars, environmental threats, the limited financial resources of developing countries and the persistent

technology gaps between developed and developing countries.

40. The success of the Secretary-General's reform to reposition the United Nations development system must be ensured. International efforts must be bolstered to, once again, place the Organization at the heart of global economic governance. There was no hope of achieving sustainable development if the international community did not carefully abide by the relevant international agreements across the economic, social and environmental dimensions. As implementation of the 2030 Agenda hinged on financing, his Government welcomed the Secretary-General's strategy to accelerate progress to that end.

41. There was an urgent need to end the illicit financial flows that undermined African development efforts. Through its Plan Sénégal Emergent, his Government had achieved remarkable progress in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals. It was cooperating with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to considerably reduce the effects of poverty, especially in rural areas, under its Programme d'Urgence de Développement Communautaire (Urgent Community Development Programme), an example of a successful partnership in the fields of energy access, sanitation, and health care and educational infrastructure. A breakthrough was necessary to achieve the mandatory consensus for formulating collective and appropriate responses to the current challenges related to sustainable development.

42. *Mr. Remaoun (Algeria), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.*

43. **Mr. Stefanile** (Italy) said that his delegation shared the view that the Committee's agenda should continue to be steered by the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Paris Agreement, and appreciated the emphasis placed on the principle of leaving no one behind during the general debate. Tackling poverty, marginalization and inequalities should be among the Committee's key priorities.

44. The forthcoming reform of the Organization's development system presented both a unique opportunity and a significant challenge. In line with the positive trend in its provision of ODA in recent years, Italy would contribute 2 million euros to the Special Purpose Trust Fund for the reinvigorated resident coordinator system.

45. It attached great importance to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2, particularly in regions most affected by climate change. Ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture should remain firmly at the centre of the international community's agenda. Maximum use should be made of the expertise and operative capacities of the relevant United Nations Rome-based agencies.

46. Respect for human rights was a fundamental element of sustainable development. As already mentioned, ending discrimination in all its forms, achieving gender equality, empowering women and girls and favouring the inclusion of the most vulnerable in societies, particularly people with disabilities, must be a common endeavour in the pursuit of the 2030 Agenda. To that end, the international community must strengthen funding for sustainable development, including by fostering global multi-stakeholder partnerships. For its part, Italy promoted the active involvement of the private sector, as demonstrated by the participation of over 200 Italian companies in the United Nations Global Compact.

47. Italy was ready to contribute to global efforts to combat climate change, which must be an absolute priority for the international community. In its efforts to fulfil the 2030 Agenda, Italy devoted particular attention to the special needs and vulnerabilities of least developed countries, landlocked developing countries and small island developing States. It was pleased to support the efforts of 10 priority countries in the development cooperation framework towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Along with six landlocked developing countries from Africa, Asia and Latin America, Italy had launched and funded projects directly or indirectly related to the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action. Ahead of the midterm review of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway (Samoa Pathway), it was also engaged in partnership initiatives aimed at promoting the sustainable development of small island developing States.

48. Economic growth and sustainable development in Africa were other high-priorities for his country and should remain high on the Second Committee agenda as well. Italy supported the realization of a long-term multidimensional partnership with Africa on topics of mutual interest, particularly, education, infrastructure, access to sustainable energy and the role of women and youth. Later in the month, it would be hosting the second Italy-Africa Conference in Rome.

49. **Mr. Park** Chull-Joo (Republic of Korea) said that, while the Secretary-General's report entitled "Progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals" (E/2018/64) showed advances in some areas, much still

a long way to go. His delegation welcomed efforts to reform the United Nations development system and the implementation plan for the reinvigorated resident coordinator system; it looked forward to open, transparent and inclusive consultations with Member States during the implementation process. The resident coordinator system must improve its overall effectiveness and efficiency; his delegation looked forward to further strengthening shared services to reduce parallel structures and maximize efficiency gains.

50. The funding compact should remain key not only to ensuring flexible funding and collaboration among agencies, but also to increasing the system's overall transparency and accountability. However, it should not discourage further collaboration with new and emerging donors. The international community should be aware of a potential disconnect between the resident coordinator implementation plan and the funding compact, and new funding mechanisms should be coordinated in a holistic manner.

51. An effective follow-up and review process for the 2030 Agenda would continue to be crucial; assessing the high-level political forum – the primary follow-up and review mechanism – would also be increasingly important. He commended the substantive discussions and vigorous theme-based review that had characterized the July 2018 high-level political forum and looked forward to the further strengthening and refinement of its process.

52. To ensure the means of implementation of the 2030 Agenda, it would be necessary to strengthen partnerships with the private sector and civil society, and accelerate implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda. Despite growing momentum for investments in sustainable development, the funding gap remained significant. He called for further discussions to find ways to mobilize investments and support for financing the 2030 Agenda with a view to ensuring that no one was left behind.

53. The international community must not lose momentum in implementing the Paris Agreement and removing the barriers to doing so. Finalizing the rulebook for that Agreement required global action based on cooperation and consensus. Despite some encouraging progress at a meeting of climate change subsidiary bodies and an ad hoc working group in Bangkok the previous month, the international community was currently embarking on the most difficult part of the process. His delegation hoped that the signatories to that Agreement would participate actively in the Krakow pre-conference ahead of the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and come up with practicable solutions.

54. The Republic of Korea had scaled up its efforts on the domestic front, and would steadfastly abide by its pledges to meet the 2030 greenhouse gas reduction targets in its nationally determined contributions under the Paris Agreement. Following the publication of the report entitled *"Global Warming of 1.5°C"* by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change the need for a strengthened global response to the threat of climate change was clearer than ever. At the international level, the Republic of Korea would continue supporting developing countries responding to climate change and hoped that the work of the Green Climate Fund and the Global Green Growth Institute would continue.

55. The international community must strengthen its disaster risk reduction efforts. As recent events had shown, losses and damage caused by natural disasters continued to grow in both size and frequency. The global and regional platforms for disaster risk reduction, including the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, were fundamental to protecting people's livelihoods and safety.

56. The ongoing repositioning of the United Nations development system should be completely consistent with the effort to increase the effectiveness of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat). His delegation noted the recommendations of the Open-ended Working Group after it met in Nairobi and looked forward to further discussing them to help make UN-Habitat better able to tackle its tasks and responsibilities.

57. **Mr. Alsharrah** (Kuwait) said that the positive results achieved in the three short years since adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals should motivate Member States to redouble their collaborative efforts. His country had harmonized its national vision with the 2030 Agenda, under the slogan "a new Kuwait by 2035", and had made sure to involve all sectors of society, including civil society, the private sector and academia. Kuwait planned to present its voluntary national review to the high-level political forum in 2019.

58. As a high-income developing country, Kuwait fulfilled its regional responsibility to assist States suffering from tensions and humanitarian crises. It would continue to establish partnerships through the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development. Lastly, he expressed his delegation's support for the Secretary-

General's initiative on reform of the United Nations development system.

59. **Mr. Tevi** (Vanuatu) said that while science, technology and innovation had brought remarkable benefits, they had also contributed to inequality and unsustainability. Poverty and non-communicable diseases continued to undermine progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, while natural disasters, exacerbated by climate change, had the capacity to reverse years of economic development. He expressed particular concern about the slow progress being made by small island developing States and the least developed countries.

60. Unequal distribution of growth was impeding poverty reduction and human development. He acknowledged that while his country had made great strides in empowering women and girls, much remained to be done to ensure that more girls had opportunities to acquire tertiary qualifications and more women participated in the highest levels of decision-making. His Government had just launched the Vanuatu National Financial Inclusion Strategy 2018–2023, an initiative aimed at delivering financial services to disadvantaged and low-income groups. His delegation welcomed ongoing efforts to reform the United Nations development system so that it could build on the 2030 Agenda, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, the Paris Agreement and the programmes of action for countries in special situations, including the Samoa Pathway and the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020.

61. Vanuatu, which, like many least developed countries, was earmarked to graduate to middle-income status, was concerned to see that countries were making that transition based on the criteria of gross national income and, to a lesser extent, human assets index, while failing to meet the economic vulnerability index threshold. He called for an institutional mechanism for phasing out country-specific benefits beyond graduation so as not to disrupt the development process. Without durable partnerships and international financing, efforts by countries like his to realize the 2030 Agenda would fail.

62. **Mr. Sisilo** (Solomon Islands) said that for graduation to be sustainable and irreversible, least developed countries needed continued access to tailored international support. Solomon Islands would continue its efforts to graduate, but as both a post-conflict country and a small island developing State, it would need time to develop prudent macroeconomic and finance policies. High fuel prices, high indebtedness, small markets and vulnerability to economic shocks and climate change made the possibility of maintaining the threshold indicators upon which graduation was premised extremely remote. He pleaded for an extended transition period to allow his country to develop a practical and smooth transition strategy that would enhance its prospects for achievement of the goals of the 2030 Agenda and the Istanbul Programme of Action. Support from development partners would enhance its prospects for graduation and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

63. **Ms. Supatashvili** (Georgia) said that his Government had been revising its development indicators and would be putting in place an innovative system of electronic monitoring to hold government agencies accountable for progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. His country attached particular importance to Goal 16 on promoting just, peaceful and inclusive societies. As a co-chair of the Open Government Partnership, Georgia had hosted the fifth Open Government Partnership summit in Tbilisi in July 2018. Together with the World Federation of United Nations Associations and its partners in the Sixteen Plus Forum, Georgia had also hosted the first annual showcase on Goal 16 on the theme "Just societies: promoting good governance, the rule of law and anti-corruption".

64. The international community was facing a critical challenge in financing for the Sustainable Development Goals. As current president of the Leading Group on Innovative Financing for Development, his country was proud to be hosting the second Tbilisi International Solidarity and Financing Forum scheduled for December 2018. As a signatory to the Paris Agreement, Georgia was expanding the use of renewable resources and promoting energy efficiency in all sectors of the economy. It was committed to the 2030 deadline for reducing its greenhouse gas emissions to 40 per cent below the 1990 level. Starting 1 October 2018, his Government had begun to implement a new law restricting the use, import and sale of polyethylene bags.

65. **Mr. Madisa** (Botswana) said that since its last voluntary national review, Botswana had made further progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals despite the many challenges it faced as a middle-income and landlocked developing country. He stressed that national efforts alone would bear no fruit without a supportive global environment that promoted financing, capacity-building and technology transfer. Eliminating poverty and hunger and advancing the priorities of groups of countries in special situations were crucial. In particular, landlocked developing countries had high transport costs and limited markets. He looked forward

to the comprehensive high-level midterm review on the implementation of the Vienna Programme of Action for the Decade 2014–2024, to be held no later than December 2019 in accordance with General Assembly resolution 72/232 on follow-up to the second United Nations Conference on Landlocked Developing Countries.

66. Botswana remained committed to the Paris Agreement and looked forward to the twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Poland in December 2018. It also looked forward to the high-level meeting on middle-income countries to be held during the current session in December 2018 and the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, to be held in Argentina in March 2019. In conclusion, he expressed the hope that the Second Committee would approach the many important items on its agenda in a spirit of compromise.

67. **Mr. Perez** (Dominican Republic) said that his country's participatory National Development Strategy had attained 72 per cent alignment with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In the Dominican Republic, all segments of the population were involved in public and private initiatives to implement both the Strategy and the 2030 Agenda. Relevant new actors from academia, NGOs and the private sector had come on board; under one agreement in particular, representatives of higher education had pledged to incorporate the Goals in university curricula and conduct joint research on sustainable development. Efforts to establish similar partnerships with local authorities, civil society and the national congress were under way.

68. Recognizing the interrelatedness of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals, the Dominican Republic had introduced policies in five priority areas to accelerate their achievement: multidimensional poverty reduction; competitiveness and decent work; sustainable consumption and production; resilience to climate change and other risks; and strong and inclusive State institutions. It had drawn up a road map for achieving Sustainable Development Goal 2 and launched a national strategy to achieve Sustainable Development Goal 1. It had also established a national consultative process on oceans to advance towards Sustainable Development Goal 14 and defined a strategy for mainstreaming gender awareness across all 17 Goals.

69. The economic impact of natural disasters, particularly on housing and population growth, was a major challenge facing the Dominican Republic, which expected urban dwellers to account for 40 per cent of its population by 2030. Currently the tenth most vulnerable country on the planet to hydrometeorological risks, the Dominican Republic was making every effort to build resilience in all sectors and at all levels of society.

70. While the Dominican Republic had experienced robust economic growth – with a gross domestic product exceeding 6.45 per cent in the past four years and a significant decline in the poverty level – fiscal constraint remained a major barrier to implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Access to external financing, in particular increased official development assistance, was limited by its status as an upper-middle-income country. Thus, its economic growth had not yet brought about a reduction in inequality, greater access to jobs and quality public services, or sustained development across the economic, social and environmental dimensions.

71. The Dominican Republic was committed to working closely with the reinvigorated resident coordinator system and the new generation of United Nations country teams proposed in General Assembly resolution 72/279 entitled "Repositioning of the United Nations development system in the context of the quadrennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system". It hoped that the repositioning of the development system would enhance support to countries for the effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda. At the same time, it wished to reiterate its commitment to multilateralism, collaboration and collective action as the means to achieving the goals of the Organization.

72. **Ms. Ahmadi** (Bahrain) said that her country had achieved a number of the Sustainable Development Goals ahead of schedule. It had just presented its first voluntary national review to the high-level political forum in July 2018. Her Government had incorporated a vast majority of the Goals into its 2015–2018 action plan, and would do the same with its 2018–2021 action plan. Bahrain had experienced a high rate of economic growth over the previous decade and had implemented correspondingly high increases in spending on health, education and social protection. The private sector had been a key partner in development, offering high-wage jobs that had helped to reduce unemployment in Bahrain to less than 4 per cent. The Government-sponsored Tamkeen fund had provided billions of dollars to small and medium-sized businesses, and trained over 100,000 individuals, including women and young people.

73. Her Government devoted special attention to housing for persons with limited income and divorced

and single women. In cooperation with the UNDP country office, Bahrain had incorporated the principle of sustainability into its housing policy by promoting eco-friendly building materials and thermal insulation to reduce energy consumption. New units were being equipped with solar energy systems that would eventually become standard.

74. **Ms. Crabtree** (Turkey) said that financing, technology transfer, and South-South cooperation were of key importance for realizing the 2030 Agenda. Her country had increased its ODA to 0.95 per cent of GDP, well above the 0.7 per cent target, much of which went to least developed countries to support implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action. Turkey was host to the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries, whose June 2018 inauguration had marked the completion of target 8 of Sustainable Development Goal 17. In addition to providing facilities for the Technology Bank's operation, her Government would be contributing $2 million annually through 2021. She called on other Member States to make their voluntary contributions.

75. Turkey was also home to the Istanbul International Centre for Private Sector in Development, one of six UNDP policy centres intended to promote inclusive business models, market-driven skills and impact investing. In partnership with the United Nations Development Programme, Turkey had launched a Sustainable Development Goal impact accelerator to support entrepreneurship and innovation in least developed countries. That initiative would be closely coordinated with the Technology Bank and include a focus on displaced persons and refugees.

76. Located at a historical crossroads of migration, Turkey had traditionally embraced people in need without discrimination, most recently by taking in millions of Syrian refugees. As a country of both origin and destination, Turkey was active in the negotiations for a global compact for migration, as had previously been the case in negotiations for the global compact on refugees. She looked forward to adoption of the new compact at the Marrakesh intergovernmental conference in December 2018, and affirmed her country's commitment to follow up by working hand in hand with the International Organization for Migration during the implementation phase.

77. Her delegation welcomed the declaration of the International Decade for Action, "Water for Sustainable Development", 2018–2028, and commended Tajikistan for the leading role it had played in raising the profile of water-related issues on the international stage. Over the past year, her country had experienced both heavy flooding and its most severe drought in 44 years. As both an upstream and downstream country, Turkey pursued a transboundary water policy aimed at efficient and equitable cooperation among riparian States. Further international cooperation would be necessary as climate change exacerbated water stress around the world.

78. Her delegation supported the United Nations development system reform process launched by the Secretary-General. A repositioned development system would effectively serve countries at different development levels. National ownership and consent should be the guiding principles, with emphasis on countries with special needs.

79. **Ms. Alali** (United Arab Emirates) said that the priority placed by her country on youth and women was exemplified by the fact that its Cabinet boasted the youngest minister in the world; it was also the first country in its region to require female members of the boards of companies and Government agencies. The United Arab Emirates had also established a Gender Balance Council, appointed nine women Cabinet ministers, and contributed some $21 million to the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women).

80. With natural disasters on the rise, instruments such as the Paris Agreement were more important than ever. She welcomed the Secretary-General's recent announcement of the climate summit to take place in September 2019. The United Arab Emirates-Caribbean Renewable Energy Fund was a model for how to help economies address climate change. She was proud to note that the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development had ranked the United Arab Emirates as the world's top per capita ODA donor.

81. The fourth industrial revolution offered dramatic new possibilities, but also unanticipated challenges. In October 2018, her capital Dubai would be hosting the United Nations World Data Forum, which focused on harnessing statistics in the service of the 2030 Agenda. As a member of the Secretary-General's recently formed High-Level Panel on Digital Cooperation, her country would be stressing digital cooperation among Governments, the private sector, civil society, international organizations and academia. International digital cooperation would also be the theme of Expo 2020 Dubai, which would be the first international exposition to be held in the Middle East, North Africa and South Asia region. The United Arab Emirates also looked forward to taking part in the Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, to be held in Marrakesh in December 2018.

82. *Mr. Skinner-Klée Arenales (Guatemala) resumed the Chair.*

83. **Mr. Kapambwe** (Zambia) said that his country had made some progress in achieving sustainable development and inclusive growth. In its efforts to become a prosperous middle-income country, Zambia was implementing its seventh national development plan with a targeted annual GDP growth rate of over 5 per cent until 2021 and the aim of raising annual domestic resource mobilization to about 18 per cent of GDP. The GDP growth rate had grown steadily since the plan was launched in 2017, although at a slightly lower rate than the previous year.

84. His Government had prioritized promoting international trade and investment, creating high-value opportunities while improving the country's competitiveness, and infrastructure development in the transport, information and communications technology and energy sectors with the involvement of the private sector. Improvements had been made in key sectors such as agriculture, tourism, manufacturing and energy.

85. The agriculture sector was the largest source of livelihood for many people in Zambia. While measures had been taken to diversify it with a view to raising the living standards in rural and urban areas, the country faced major challenges such as low agricultural productivity, especially among small-scale farmers, inadequate farm mechanization, poor market connections and low value additions to agricultural output. In response, his Government had introduced climate-smart agricultural practices and would continue developing irrigation infrastructure and investing in disease and pest control to protect crops and livestock.

86. His Government was enhancing electricity generation and promoting major investments in transport infrastructure to achieve better capitalization of broad-based recovery and an improved economic outlook. To accelerate industrialization, it had financed the establishment of multi-facility economic zones, industrial parks and other support infrastructure. Several policy and structural reforms had also been implemented under the Economic Stabilization and Growth Programme, including measures towards improving domestic resource mobilization through modernization and automation of revenue collection processes, enhancing tax incentives and broadening the economy's tax base.

87. Economic growth in Zambia, which was largely dependent on primary commodities, had been negatively affected by the fall in commodity prices, low foreign direct investment inflow, the country's declining share in international trade, and inadequate and costly financing. Declining ODA and other sources of development financing posed a great risk to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Domestic resource mobilization efforts must be complemented by enhanced international public finance and policy. All development partners were urged to commit to and intensify cooperation efforts to curb illicit financial flows in all their forms, including through tax evasion and corruption, which were draining Africa's resources. His delegation called for effective development cooperation and stronger support for South-South cooperation, which should complement, rather than replace, North-South cooperation.

88. Zambia was continuing to pursue its initiatives with regard to early warning systems, climate change adaptation and mitigation and resource mobilization. To enhance early warning systems and increase capacity to interpret climate change information, his Government was making every effort to improve access to weather-related information, especially for farmers seeking to adopt climate-resilient agricultural practices. It was also strengthening the nation's capacity for synthesizing, analysing and transmitting climate risk assessments and promoting climate information services. The Second Committee should continue to urge Member States to honour their commitments under the Paris Agreement. That would not only protect people's livelihoods from adverse environmental impacts, but also reduce incidences of weather patterns resulting in droughts, floods and extreme temperatures.

89. In conclusion, he commended the Secretary-General on the progress made in reforming the United Nations development system and preparing the implementation plan to enhance the work of country teams and resident coordinators.

90. **Ms. Lodhi** (Pakistan) said that the contentious global environment hampered the full achievement of the objectives of international agreements, which would have adverse implications for all and, particularly, for the growth and prosperity of developing countries. During the current session, the Committee should focus on ways of strengthening multilateral cooperative arrangements, promoting international cooperation to achieve shared objectives and addressing impediments to the implementation of key international agreements, as well as emerging development challenges.

91. Her Government's key priorities corresponded to such 2030 Agenda objectives as revitalizing the economy; expanding the agricultural sector; transitioning towards sustainable and affordable energy while focusing on efficiency; conservation and sustainable use of water resources; a green agenda,

including a 10 billion tree plantation campaign; reform of the governance structure and enhanced accountability; expansion of the social safety net; transformation of the health and education sectors; and women's empowerment and development. While domestic resource mobilization and greater self-reliance were important, a favourable international environment, greater access to financial resources and technological support remained critical.

92. As the international community moved forward with reforming the United Nations development system, the focus should remain on development; respecting national ownership, leadership and sovereignty; ensuring that a reformed resident coordinator system was fully in keeping with the relevant General Assembly resolution and the mandate agreed with the host Government; and the host Government's role in finalizing the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the composition of United Nations country teams. All of that hinged on sufficient financial resources to cover administrative costs, especially for the resident coordinator.

93. Illicit financial flows caused by tax evasion, corruption and transnational organized crime had serious implications for economic, social and political stability and development, particularly in developing countries. Her Government prioritized accountability and recovery of stolen assets, which must be fully enforced. Enhancing international cooperation, for which the United Nations Convention against Corruption provided the required framework, was crucial to combating illicit financial flows. The return of stolen assets pursuant to Chapter V of the Convention should be fully enforced.

94. The availability and efficient management of water resources underpinned poverty eradication, economic growth, food and energy security and environmental sustainability. As a lower riparian State, Pakistan was highly vulnerable to water-related disasters and likely to be water-scarce by 2025. It had recently adopted a national water policy offering a comprehensive approach to water issues, which entailed increasing water storage capacity through a number of large-scale projects. The Diamer Bhasha Dam project would not only serve as a major source of clean energy, drinking water and irrigation, but also significantly enhance the country's water management capabilities and safeguard against flooding. International cooperation should be scaled up to support water-related national priorities and protect the interests of lower riparian States through strong and effective regional mechanisms.

95. Climate change had emerged as the single most critical challenge of the day. It was also a threat multiplier, aggravating existing political, social and economic challenges. Pakistan remained acutely vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change: it was threatened by drought, desertification, glacial melt, rising sea levels and recurrent flooding. Addressing climate change was a collective endeavour that required a global response. She called for an early conclusion of the modalities of the Paris Agreement, and renewed political will to achieve its objectives, including fulfilment of the pledge to mobilize US$100 billion annually by 2020.

96. Pakistan had always attached great importance to South-South collaboration and worked closely with many developing countries. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor was a shining example of win-win cooperation. It was enormous in scale and scope and promised vast economic and developmental benefits to the entire region and beyond.

97. Colonial and foreign occupation greatly hampered economic and social development and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. As the international community envisioned an inclusive world, it must also ensure that people under colonial rule and occupation were not left behind either.

98. **Ms. Jemuovic** (Serbia) said that her Government had established an Inter-Ministerial Working Group to monitor and implement all the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda. By late 2017, the Group had convened meetings that included representatives of the private and civil sectors to begin adjusting the Sustainable Development Goals and targets to the chapters of the European Union accession negotiations and to United Nations methodology. In partnership with the local United Nations country team, it was developing a process for funding the 2030 Agenda. A national sustainable development fund would be established and function under the Group's auspices. In addition, the German Agency for International Cooperation and the Serbian Ministry of Finance had launched a public finance reform project to increase the visibility of the Sustainable Development Goals.

99. A newly-established focus group in the Serbian National Assembly was particularly important for facilitating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and addressing financing issues, and the Statistical Office had organized workshops to map out Sustainable Development Goal indicators. Her Government was grateful to the United Nations country team and the United Nations Istanbul Regional Hub for providing support during the September 2018 mainstreaming,

acceleration and policy strategy (MAPS) mission in Serbia. That same month, the United Nations had also provided support for a subregional conference, hosted by Serbia, to promote implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the Western Balkans. Serbia would present its voluntary national review during the July 2019 high-level political forum.

100. Serbia recognized the significance of climate change and the need for mitigation and adaptation measures. To improve its own legislative framework, her Government was preparing a draft law on climate change. A long-term national strategy for adjusting to climate change that it was drafting in cooperation with the European Union would be completed by the end of the year.

101. Since the opening of the Western Balkans migrant route, Serbia had done its utmost to help Middle Eastern and African migrants transiting through its territory to Western and Northern European countries. Of the 900,000 refugees and migrants who had transited Serbia since 2015, approximately 3,000 remained in the country. Most of them were accommodated in asylum and reception centres and accorded various types of assistance, including health care and children's education. Her country had regularly demonstrated its solidarity and humanity, for which it frequently received praise from migrants, United Nations agencies and the international community. As a country that had dealt with the issue of protracted displacement for over 20 years, Serbia called for a comprehensive solution to the refugee and migrant crisis.

102. Her delegation welcomed the ongoing reform of the United Nations development system and fully agreed that joint and coordinated responses to capacity development were more necessary than ever, including a critical review of the system's internal capacities to support countries in implementing the 2030 Agenda.

103. **Mr. Empole** (Democratic Republic of the Congo) said that, in the light of the catastrophe and magnitude of the migration crisis, it was important to act quickly, keeping in mind that the best solution was to promote development and stability around the world.

104. Every Member State was responsible for helping to curb the impact of climate change. Member States must accelerate the implementation of the Paris Agreement, pooling their resources to address global warming and climate disruption. His Government was determined to fulfil its commitments to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and mitigate the effects of climate change at the national level and expected its partners to do likewise; in particular, it hoped they would contribute to the Green Climate Fund to assist the least developed countries.

105. In fulfilling the 2030 Agenda, the United Nations must continue to ensure multilateral coordination to ensure genuine and effective international solidarity, and promote greater interaction with development partners, including international financial and economic institutions, with a view to mobilizing necessary financial resources. Without significant funding, the Sustainable Development Goals were destined to fail.

106. The Democratic Republic of the Congo was experiencing a period of economic stability, as evidenced by the encouraging results obtained in various sectors. To address its development challenges, his country was determined to implement its people-centred National Strategic Development Plan, which genuinely took into account the three dimensions of sustainable development. In order to maintain current economic growth levels, boost its chances of success and foster conditions conducive to establishing a prosperous and modern nation, his Government had pledged to respect human rights and strengthen security, democracy and justice, which would help it fortify its institutions. In addition, it was committed to improving governance and transparency, particularly in the forestry, mining and oil sectors.

107. In that same vein, his Government had implemented a policy of improving business conditions and creating a climate propitious to mobilizing substantial financial resources to develop the private sector and bolster its competitiveness. It was also working to increase productivity and develop a high-performing agricultural sector that would make it possible to achieve food self-sufficiency.

108. Moreover, his Government was striving to implement large-scale public works projects to build roads, highways and hydroelectric dams; provide access to energy, water and sanitation; and modernize public services. It was currently developing a policy aimed at youth employment and the intensive industrialization of the economy with a view to considerably expanding value chains in all sectors of economic activity, particularly those related to natural resources. In addition, his country was bolstering tourism promotion. Although tourism infrastructure was still quite limited, the Democratic Republic of the Congo was making every effort to develop it.

109. His Government remained firmly committed to the Paris Agreement. It was aware of its responsibility to preserve and restore ecosystems, given that it contained the second largest forest system in the world. The Democratic Republic of the Congo had invested

significantly in the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (UN-REDD); it had designated 13.41 per cent of its national territory as protected areas.

110. His Government had introduced major reforms designed to reap a demographic dividend, including strategic investments in health and population control, with a view to strengthening human capital and promoting the employability of youth.

111. The 2030 Agenda had given fresh impetus to the international community's efforts to achieve a more peaceful, prosperous and just world while emphasizing the inextricable link between peace, security and development, which were mutually reinforcing. The international community's credibility relied, more than ever, on its capacity to fulfil that Agenda and its best means of doing so was unity within the framework of the United Nations.

112. **Ms. Al-Mamari** (Oman) said that achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals would require capacity-building, technology transfer and innovative approaches. Her country would be presenting its voluntary national review to the high-level political forum in 2019. Oman paid special attention to the environment and made sure that its legislation was in line with global standards. With international trade playing a greater role in development than ever, she urged the World Trade Organization to promote a multilateral system capable of addressing any trade-related problems that might arise.

113. **Mr. Rai** (Papua New Guinea) said that his delegation had noted with interest the statement made by the representative of the Brookings Institution. His Government had put in place and implemented strategic and sectoral policies that directly addressed the country's economic, social and environmental objectives, and integrated the Sustainable Development Goals into its Third Medium-Term Development Plan. Over the past three years, Papua New Guinea had made measured strides in the areas of economic empowerment, education, health care and gender equality, all of which required further work.

114. His country's localization of the Sustainable Development Goals was underpinned by its Melanesian traditions and cultures, which epitomized the principle of leaving no one behind. While national leadership, ownership and space were necessary for fulfilling the Goals, experience had shown that development outcomes were best when all partners, including the Government, the private sector, civil society, academia, media, faith-based organizations, local communities and the international community, collaborated closely to improve the well-being of a nation and its people.

115. To enhance key development partnerships, his Government had revised its Development Cooperation Policy to account for growing partnerships with non-traditional sources, including the private sector. It was working with the private sector to identify ways to unlock its share of an expected US$12 trillion for advancing the Sustainable Development Goals. In November 2018, his country would host the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit, which represented 39 per cent of the global population and three of the world's biggest economies. The summit would provide an opportunity to foster partnerships and dialogue in key development areas and advance policy formulation.

116. His Government also recognized the critical importance of a reliable evidence base to support the monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals. It had launched a National Strategy for the Development of Statistics and was revising its National Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, which would be supported by a revamped National Statistics Office. Papua New Guinea was grateful for the support it had received from bilateral and multilateral development partners.

117. Like many small island developing States, his country's vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters remained a serious challenge to fulfilling its aspirations to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The adverse impacts of rising sea levels and climate change and natural hazards had been increasing in frequency, intensity and scale, challenging the ability of communities to cope using their traditional risk reduction knowledge. The latest report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change on the impact of climate change at 1.5°C gave cause for concern.

118. The costs of climate-related disasters could be crippling to a country. The largest earthquake in the history of Papua New Guinea had taken place earlier that year, killing several hundred people and displacing over half a million. His Government and its development partners had invested more than US$120 million in addressing the El Niño-induced drought, which had affected approximately 40 per cent of the population.

119. His Government had been proactive in addressing the impacts of those disasters through policies and measures to mainstream adaptation and mitigation into its national planning. However, the challenges were substantial and continued to grow, and current resources did not allow for a sustainable response. For many small

island developing States, concerted and accelerated action, including under the Paris Agreement, was critical to fulfilling the commitment to combat climate change. Developed countries should not only provide the means of implementation in line with the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, but also strengthen mechanisms such as the Green Climate Fund through concrete action.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.

United Nations A/C.2/73/SR.6

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Chair: Mr. Skinner-Klée Arenales ..... (Guatemala)
later: Mr. Remaoun ..... (Algeria)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

General debate (*continued*)

1. **Mr. Jürgenson** (Estonia) said that the Committee's work on the three dimensions of sustainable development had taken on new importance in the light of the growing threat to multilateralism, the increasing urgency of climate change and the slowing pace of global poverty reduction.

2. The need to make progress in the environmental dimension was highlighted by the plight of small island developing States and low-lying coastal areas facing the existential threat of climate change. While hopes were high for a fruitful twenty-fourth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Committee must also continue to directly address climate change in its own work.

3. The Committee had a responsibility to support financing for development and the implementation of the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, placing special emphasis on addressing the specific economic challenges facing countries in special situations, with a view to reaching the furthest behind first. Efforts must also be redoubled to advance the empowerment of women and girls, without whom the Sustainable Development Goals would not be achieved.

4. Estonia remained a committed leader of sustainable development efforts. For example, as President of the fourth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, it would focus on innovative environmental solutions and sustainable consumption and production. A joint project with the United Nations Development Programme had also been launched to help other Member States follow the path Estonia had taken to achieve its own development, which had been greatly accelerated through the adoption of information and communications technology and e-government solutions. If elected as a non-permanent member of the Security Council for the period 2020–2021, Estonia would strive to highlight the connection between sustainable development and peace in the work of that body.

5. While advances had been made in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including through reform of the United Nations development system, much remained to be done. The Committee should be guided by efficiency, equality and empathy to accelerate further progress.

6. **Ms. Ribeiro** (Timor-Leste) said that in a mere 16 years of independence, her country had laid the foundation for peace, stability and nation-building and was striving to become an upper middle income country by 2030. To that end, Timor-Leste was strengthening its non-oil economy through diversification, more and better job creation for young people and investment in such productive sectors as agriculture, tourism, fisheries and manufacturing, with a focus on private sector and rural development.

7. The strategic development plan that Timor-Leste had adopted for the period 2011–2030 had been fully harmonized with the Sustainable Development Goals. It covered the key areas of social capital, infrastructure development and economic development and was underpinned by strategies for creating an effective institutional framework and a strong microeconomic foundation. Following its early adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the Government had immediately established a working group to integrate the Goals with its existing strategic plan.

8. As a small island developing State, post-conflict country and least developed country, Timor-Leste was keenly aware that it belonged to the States most vulnerable to being left behind. Member States, in particular its development partners, should therefore strengthen cooperation and allocate adequate resources for the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020, the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

9. Timor-Leste, supported the reform of the United Nations development system to make it fit for purpose and welcomed the Secretary-General's strategy for financing the 2030 Agenda. It also welcomed the establishment of the Technology Bank for the Least Developed Countries, which would increase access to scientific and technological solutions and promote integration into the global knowledge-based economy, and looked forward to presenting its first voluntary national review at the high-level political forum on sustainable development in 2019.

10. **Ms. Cordova Soria** (Plurinational State of Bolivia) said that in the last 12 years, the Government had prioritized eliminating poverty and reducing inequality through a development approach that harnessed the knowledge of its indigenous peoples, in harmony with nature. In that time, the country had tripled its per capita gross domestic product and had become a leader of economic growth in its region.

11. Specific measures aimed at reducing social inequality had made significant progress in closing the wealth gap and reducing extreme poverty. Substantial gains had also been made in increasing life expectancy and access to drinking water and basic sanitation, as well as in reducing infant mortality and chronic child undernutrition. Those achievements had resulted from natural resource exploitation by strategic enterprises, a pluralist economic model and a policy of wealth redistribution.

12. The 2030 Agenda was a framework for the concept of "vivir bien" (living well). While Mother Earth could go on living well without humanity, the reverse was not true. In that regard, while significant global efforts had been made to resolve the climate crisis, the problem could only be resolved by addressing its underlying causes. Chief among those were capitalism and its unsustainable models of production and consumption, which were a drain on Mother Earth and life itself.

13. The only way to promote sustainable development that adequately balanced the economic, social and environmental needs of current and future generations was to address the root causes of poverty and inequality at the national and international levels, namely: the capitalist model of development that exploited some to benefit others; excessive consumption and destructive production; and the prioritization of military spending, which sowed death and destruction, over development spending, which sustained and improved life.

14. **Ms. Muchiri** (Kenya) said that climate change was disrupting the livelihoods of millions of people in East Africa and provoking conflicts over dwindling resources, in particular arable land and water. Considering that agriculture underpinned most rural economies and constituted the backbone of its own economy, Kenya supported the call made by the Secretary-General for urgent action to ensure sustainable food productions systems, promote rural development and empower small-scale farmers in rural areas.

15. In implementing the 2030 Agenda, Kenya continued to emphasize domestic resource mobilization. In that regard, it had implemented a tax modernization programme to raise revenues.

16. The Government had continued to invest resources to encourage growth in the information and communications technology sector, which remained critical. Indeed, most government services were offered through that key sector. However, high speed connectivity remained a challenge worth overcoming given the jobs it stood to create, in particular for young people. The United Nations should therefore address the persistent digital divide that was most acutely felt by countries in the global South.

17. Kenya was proud to be the only country in the global South to host United Nations programmes, namely the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) and the United Nations Environment Programme, and urged Member States to support the two forthcoming draft resolutions related to strengthening the functioning of their headquarters. Stakeholders from all sectors of the blue economy should also participate in the upcoming Sustainable Blue Economy Conference, which Kenya would be co-hosting with the Government of Canada. The Conference was focused on unleashing the untapped economic potential of global bodies of water to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

18. **Mr. Lamce** (Albania) said that the historic adoption of General Assembly resolution 72/279 on the repositioning of the United Nations development system had marked the beginning of a new phase in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Albania looked forward to the concrete results of that reform.

19. The parliament of Albania had unanimously approved a resolution confirming its commitment to the 2030 Agenda and many governmental and non-governmental organizations alike were engaged in supporting the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. In 2018, Albania had presented its first national voluntary review, which was fully compatible with its national strategic plan for development and integration into the European Union. Both the national voluntary review and the strategic plan encapsulated the same vision for development based on good governance, the rule of law, a competitive and sustainable economy, and the promotion of and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Albania looked forward to a future decision to open accession negotiations with the European Union and remained committed to carrying out domestic reforms in key areas.

20. To achieve the Goals, Governments should partner with non-State actors to discover innovative solutions, promote good corporate governance, encourage the flow of targeted long-term investment, including foreign direct investment, and mobilize additional resources to support further development.

21. **Mr. Hajiyev** (Azerbaijan) said that the Committee had an indispensable leadership role to play in ensuring financing for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. Azerbaijan continued to implement its own sustainable development strategy through the regional economic road maps it had adopted in 2016, which were designed

to facilitate its smooth transition from a traditional economy to one that was more diversified, competitive, resilient and innovative.

22. The Government was revising its national development policies and programmes to bring them into alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals, with a focus on poverty eradication, health care, education, gender, employment and infrastructure development.

23. As a landlocked developing country, Azerbaijan had a crucial stake in increasing access to international trade. It was a strong promoter of East-West, North-South and South-West international transport corridors and was pursuing the development of transport connectivity within regional and international organizations and in bilateral and trilateral contexts. Through those efforts, Azerbaijan was continuing to contribute to the sustainable development of Eurasia.

24. **Archbishop Auza** (Observer for the Holy See) said that development could not be restricted to economic growth alone. In promoting integral human development, political, economic and financial systems must respect the dignity of every person and the identity of every nation.

25. Lamentable attempts had been witnessed in the Committee the previous year to shift the focus from integral human development to various controversial topics under discussion in the other Main Committees. As a result, debates about selected rights had eclipsed a more holistic approach to assessing people's needs. While respect for fundamental human rights and human dignity was essential for the eradication of poverty and the promotion of integral human development, the term "human rights" was in danger of becoming a rhetorical catch-all, endlessly expanded to suit the passing tastes of the age.

26. To approach the 2030 Agenda through an excessively economic, environmental, sociological or ideological lens was to forget the essential human dimension of development and ultimately undermine its purpose. Pope Francis had issued a warning to that effect in his remarks before the General Assembly in 2015, using the term "ideological colonization" to refer to the use of development models to impose an alien worldview or set of values on societies.

27. The Pope had also said that the social upheavals of the 1960s had given rise to claims to new rights that evinced a certain anthropological reductionism and strayed significantly from the vision of the human person upon which the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was grounded. Paradoxically, there was a risk that modern forms of ideological colonization might take hold in the very name of human rights, to the detriment of the poorer and the most vulnerable.

28. The Holy See favoured a humanistic vision, one that allowed people to see one another as allies instead of competitors and to recognize that the legitimacy of an economic system depended not only on quantitative growth, but on its capacity to produce development for each man and woman. Under that vision, a rights-based approach must be balanced by a "responsibilities-based" approach.

29. **Mr. Louati** (Tunisia) said that it was clear from the report of the Secretary-General on progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals (E/2018/64) that conflict, climate change and inequality were the main factors fuelling the spread of malnutrition, swelling the numbers of displaced people and hindering efforts to achieve those Goals. African countries, in particular, were suffering the consequences, with rising levels of poverty, unemployment and marginalization. They needed more support from the international community.

30. The key aspects of his Government's national development plan for the period 2016–2020 were: good governance; efforts to boost the economy; human development and social integration; regional development; and the green economy. The reform process in Tunisia was ongoing, especially in the areas of public administration, tax collection, efforts to curb corruption, and justice and security. In line with Goal 16, his Government was working to build a peaceful, inclusive and just society by reducing poverty, improving conditions in marginalized areas of the interior and vulnerable sectors of society, stimulating employment and improving infrastructure. Education, health care, especially sexual and reproductive health care, and women's rights and gender equality were priorities. Empowering women and young people was crucial for achieving the Goals.

31. The global partnership for sustainable development must be reactivated to help developing countries, especially middle-income countries and those in transition. Aside from funding and technology transfer, they needed support to industrialize, improve infrastructure and invest in emerging sectors. They also needed help to build resilience to the effects of climate change. Greater cooperation was needed to combat flows of illicit finance, tax evasion and corruption and to recover misappropriated funds that had been earmarked to fund development projects. Tunisia stood by its commitment to lend its expertise to other Arab and African countries in the framework of South-South and triangular cooperation.

32. Tunisia welcomed the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, which would be signed in Marrakesh, Morocco, in December 2018, and the reform process of the United Nations development system, which must be made more effective and transparent.

33. **Ms. Mucavi** (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) said that rising global hunger was undermining the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 2. That alarming trend was being driven by climate extremes, conflict, protracted crises and continued economic sluggishness in many countries. Despite increasing urbanization, rural areas were generally further behind on progress towards Goals 1, 2, 6 and 7.

34. At the same time, obesity was on the rise in many developing countries. Hunger and obesity often coexisted under the same roof and might even affect the same person at different stages of his or her life. That paradox was evidence of broken food systems.

35. Investments such as making agriculture more resilient and sustainable, supporting family farming, creating decent jobs in rural and urban areas, and strengthening social protection would help improve food security and nutrition, contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation and address inequalities between rural and urban areas and between men and women.

36. The Food and Agriculture Organization would be hosting an upcoming symposium to facilitate a discussion from the family farmer perspective and propose pathways and interventions to help them unlock the potential benefits of agricultural innovation.

37. **Ms. Carpentier** (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)) said that it was crucial to improve cooperation between United Nations Headquarters and the United Nations Office at Geneva and to revitalize the UNCTAD intergovernmental process to better align it with the 2030 Agenda, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the repositioned United Nations development system and the broader international architecture.

38. With the established process for considerations of multilateral trade rules effectively frozen, many countries saw UNCTAD as a safe space in which to engage and consider issues related to trade and development, such as the digital economy, with a view to gradually building an international consensus. The revitalization of UNCTAD was aimed at strengthening the consensus-building role of the Trade and Development Board and its various meetings.

Agenda item 21: Implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations Conferences on Human Settlements and on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)

(A/73/83–E/2018/62 and A/73/307)

39. **Ms. Sharif** (Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat)), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements and on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) (A/73/307), said that the report included an update on the work of the open-ended working group established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 72/226 to examine different options for strengthening the oversight that Member States exercised over UN-Habitat. The expected outcome of deliberations on the new governance structure for UN-Habitat was a more trusted, transparent and accountable body that was capable of greater and more tangible impact, in addition to being more fit for purpose and effective.

40. For its part, the open-ended working group had invited Governments to continue to work towards the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, and to support key priority areas such as capacity-building and the establishment of inclusive partnerships, especially between national and local governments. It had found that UN-Habitat needed to continue to strengthen its collaboration with the regional commissions and the United Nations system to provide regionally appropriate guidance in the implementation of the New Urban Agenda towards achieving the Goals. It had also found that innovative financing mechanisms were key and had encouraged Member States to support the introduction of an urban window in the Sustainable Development Goals Fund. In the light of those findings and recommendations, the Committee must now take the requisite decisions to enable UN-Habitat to bounce back, including arriving at a consensus on its governance structure. Programme leadership and staff were committed to gaining back trust.

41. Introducing the report of the Secretary-General on progress on the implementation of the New Urban Agenda (A/73/83–E/2018/62), she said that the report highlighted the need to adopt a reporting system that remained country-led, built on the current work of United Nations agencies and development partners, but also integrated the actions of a wide range of stakeholders for synergetic results.

42. In that context, UN-Habitat was increasing cooperation with the regional commissions, supporting regional ministerial conferences and stakeholder mobilization, facilitating inter-agency collaboration, building Sustainable Development Goal-monitoring capacity and co-producing knowledge. It was also increasingly focused on localizing the Goals, working closely with the United Nations Development Programme and United Cities and Local Governments, including on the creation of a knowledge platform. National urban policies also remained an important tool. UN-Habitat and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development continued to monitor progress and compile their findings in Global State of National Urban Policy.

43. In countries affected by conflict, UN-Habitat was continuing to increase its impact through its integrated urban programming. The Programme had also expanded the use of its urban profiling tools to develop a shared analysis guiding humanitarian and development efforts in Iraq, Lebanon, Libya and the Syrian Arab Republic.

44. UN-Habitat was continuing to strengthen its collaboration with the rest of the United Nations system, working towards a more system-wide approach to sustainable urbanization and adding its urban expertise to other global priorities, including migration, gender, youth and climate change. Many United Nations entities had already developed a strategy or plan for implementing the New Urban Agenda.

45. Despite some positive notes, the core financial situation of UN-Habitat was highly problematic. On the one hand, demand remained strong for its support of country programmes and for its normative and operational services and products, with income for earmarked normative programmes exceeding the biennial budget by 28 per cent and income for regional and country programmes (technical cooperation) standing at 89 per cent of the biennial budget. On the other hand, non-earmarked contributions stood at just $2.8 million. While that slight improvement since June 2018 demonstrated the trust Member States had placed in UN-Habitat, the figure was still low relative to the annual budget of $13 million, putting the core capacity of the Programme at risk.

46. A change process had been initiated to enhance competency, accountability, transparency, trust, efficiency and effectiveness. She was therefore grateful to the Governments of Sweden and Norway for their support in that area, and to the Government of Malaysia in particular, which had committed $1 million in non-earmarked contributions and $250,000 in earmarked contributions.

47. **Ms. Elgarf** (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that sustainable urban development and human settlements could be key drivers of sustainable development in national and subnational development plans. Much of the world's rapid urban population growth was taking place in developing countries and the New Urban Agenda represented a vision of cities and human settlements characterized by quality of life, equity, environmental sustainability and economic inclusivity. It recognized the roles of cities and human settlements as a positive force for achieving sustainable development.

48. As the entity responsible for the implementation and review of the New Urban Agenda and related dimensions of the 2030 Agenda, UN-Habitat required continuous re-engineering to ensure that it remained fit for purpose. The Programme continued to play a critical role in developing international norms, values and principles on sustainable urbanization and human settlements; in assisting countries to address challenges arising from rapid urbanization and inadequate human settlements; and in providing technical expertise and capacity-building through domestication and project implementation in over 90 countries.

49. However, the challenges of urbanization had multiplied in number and complexity since UN-Habitat was created in the 1970s, often requiring immediate attention. The dynamism and rapid evolution of cities, towns and human settlements, compounded by growing populations and increasing poverty, required a more responsive, effective and better-resourced Programme, taking into account the financial situation of Member States.

50. Lastly, the Group was greatly concerned by the urgent need to properly fund UN-Habitat. Voluntary contributions must be secured to support the normative and operational work of the Programme, enabling it to strengthen efforts at the international and local levels.

51. **Mr. Phansourivong** (Lao People's Democratic Republic), speaking on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), said that urbanization was a necessary driver of economic growth. Indeed, no country had ever ascended to middle-income status without a significant rural-to-urban shift in population. However, unplanned urban growth could lead to worsened socioeconomic inequalities and risks and to environmental degradation. That, in turn, would present massive sustainability challenges, including in respect of housing, infrastructure, basic services and food security. Therefore, the New Urban Agenda remained highly

critical for the localization and achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

52. ASEAN viewed continued sustainable development and urbanization as a huge challenge. By 2030, almost half of the total population in South-East Asia would be urban. That trend was driven significantly by the growth of medium-sized cities, with populations ranging from 200,000 to 2 million. They often did not have the capacity to deal with the pressures of urbanization, unlike more established metropolitan cities.

53. With rapid urbanization placing significant demands and stress on infrastructure, sustainable infrastructure was imperative. To ensure the intensification of infrastructure development efforts and cooperation, ASEAN had recently established a lead implementing body for the sustainable infrastructure component of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity 2025. Its work would be critical in view of ASEAN countries' annual infrastructure investment needs of at least $110 billion.

54. The impetus for directing national efforts toward sustainable urbanization and environmentally sustainable cities was provided by the Master Plan and by the ASEAN Socio-cultural Community Blueprint 2025. ASEAN had subsequently announced the establishment of its smart cities network, a collaborative platform that supported smart and sustainable urban development and used technology to improve lives by synergizing development efforts, sharing best practices and catalysing more opportunities for growth, innovation, capacity-building and sustainable development.

55. ASEAN had taken an active interest in the issue of urbanization, with Malaysia hosting the ninth World Urban Forum in 2018. The adopted outcome document from the Forum provided a useful reference point for re-energizing commitment to the New Urban Agenda.

56. **Mr. Herrera Molina** (El Salvador), speaking on behalf of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), said that the Community welcomed the New Urban Agenda and was committed to supporting its follow-up and review process. In addressing how cities and human settlements were planned, designed, financed, developed, governed and managed, the New Urban Agenda would contribute to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. CELAC had developed a regional action plan for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda in Latin America and the Caribbean for the period 2016–2036, in which national authorities supported a shift towards a new urban paradigm that recognized the city as a macro-level public good, where the economic, social, cultural and environmental rights of all were guaranteed.

57. There should be a balance between the normative and operational activities of UN-Habitat, with its normative work integrated into its operational work and the experience gained in the operational field fed into its normative work, in line with the principles and commitments of the New Urban Agenda and in support of the implementation of the urban dimensions of the Sustainable Development Goals.

58. In accordance with its role as a focal point for sustainable urbanization and human settlements, UN-Habitat should collaborate with other United Nations programmes and entities, Member States, local authorities and relevant stakeholders, to contribute to a United Nations system-wide strategy. It should continue generating evidence-based and practical guidance for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and related dimensions of the 2030 Agenda, and further develop the action framework for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, in close consultation with Member States, local authorities and stakeholders.

59. In order to achieve the necessary reform of the governance structures of UN-Habitat, the balanced package outlined in the findings and recommendations of the open-ended working group established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 72/226 must be maintained. An effective country-led follow-up and review mechanism that promoted the full, effective and timely implementation of the New Urban Agenda should also be developed.

60. **Ms. Carey** (Bahamas), speaking on behalf of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), said that the New Urban Agenda provided the international community with a comprehensive set of actions that could contribute to social inclusion, environmental protection and economic growth in urban areas over the next 20 years.

61. By 2030 much of the population of Latin America and the Caribbean would live in urban areas. However, an unfortunate feature of rapid urbanization in the Caribbean was the creation of a housing deficit that had resulted in a large share of the population living in informal settlements that were disproportionately affected by landslides, flooding, sea surges and earthquakes. The need to protect homes against rising sea levels was a particular concern, given that more than half of the population in the region lived within five kilometres of the coastline.

62. The region would therefore need to focus on strengthening building codes, enhancing the resilience

of communities and incorporating a greener and more sustainable ethos into policy formulation, among other areas. In addition to focusing on the environment, climate change and resilience, the New Urban Agenda should also pay due attention to such issues as adequate housing, urban and territorial planning, urban governance, water and sanitation and sustainable mobility. Furthermore, the New Urban Agenda must be implemented with a focus on human rights and gender equality, prioritizing the equity and sustainability of human settlements as a means for the full development of all.

63. The role of UN-Habitat in forging partnerships for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda at all levels was pivotal. CARICOM noted with appreciate the various activities performed by UN-Habitat, fully supported its role as the focal point for sustainable urbanization and human settlements programmes and welcomed strategies to strengthen the governance structure of UN-Habitat in order to make it more fit for purpose.

64. **Mr. Al Shuaibi** (Oman), speaking on behalf of the Group of Arab States, said that Arab economies had been transitioning from agricultural to industrial since the 1940s and, as a consequence, many Arab cities were ringed by informal settlements created by migrants from the countryside. In 2015, the Council of Arab Ministers of Housing and Reconstruction of the League of Arab States had approved the Arab Strategy for Housing and Sustainable Urban Development 2030. That Strategy was built around six objectives that were in line with those of Sustainable Development Goal 11 on making cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

65. The Group had submitted a position paper to the United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III), and had taken part in creating the zero draft of the New Urban Agenda and the Quito Declaration on Sustainable Cities and Human Settlements for All. The Arab States regarded the outcomes of Habitat III as a reference for urban planning in their region.

66. Wars in the Arab region were creating large numbers of refugees. He called on UN-Habitat to help those refugees by mobilizing humanitarian assistance, which should not be counted as part of official development assistance. He also drew attention to the funding crisis being faced by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). That crisis was creating burdens not only for the refugees themselves but also for the major host States, which were Jordan, Lebanon and Syria.

67. **Mr. Sawant** (India) said that the New Urban Agenda set a new global standard for sustainable urban development and had important synergies with the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030.

68. One sixth of the global population lived in India, where urbanization had become an important determinant of rapid economic growth and poverty reduction: its urban areas generated over two thirds of gross domestic product and accounted for 90 per cent of government revenues. Ongoing national efforts to manage rapid urbanization through innovative and dynamic measures complemented international efforts to chart a New Urban Agenda.

69. His Government, which was fully conscious of the challenges and opportunities offered by urbanization, was currently implementing not only the world's largest sanitation and hygiene programmes but also the world's largest housing programme for the poor. The Government aimed to build 11 million affordable homes for urban Indians by the year 2022 and had launched a smart cities initiative to strengthen urban infrastructure and give citizens a decent quality of life and a clean and sustainable environment. To ease pressure on larger urban centres, connectivity to smaller cities was also being improved using green and clean energy.

70. His delegation supported the open-ended working group's recommendations for reform of the intergovernmental structure of UN-Habitat and called for action to effectively address the problem of its declining funding.

71. **Ms. Reem Al Saud** (Saudi Arabia) said that cities had the potential to create enabling environments for sustainable development. UN-Habitat should play a leading role in promoting the new concepts reflected in the New Urban Agenda. Her country's rapid economic growth had dramatically increased its number of cities, and her Government had developed an urban strategy that was in line with the 2030 Agenda. The Kingdom had worked with UN-Habitat to implement programmes designed to create better urban environments by combating congestion and urban sprawl. Her Government was cooperating with the private sector to implement modern and sustainable approaches, with special attention to the concerns of young people, women and persons with special needs.

72. **Mr. Naumkin** (Russian Federation) said that the role of UN-Habitat as the focal point for sustainable urbanization and human settlements within the United Nations system was only set to increase in

importance. In that context, his delegation welcomed the ongoing efforts of the Executive Director and her team to strengthen UN-Habitat. The reforms undertaken should enhance the effectiveness of its work and build the necessary capacities for the implementation of the New Urban Agenda.

73. In recent years a number of events on urban settlements had been organized in the Russian Federation in conjunction with UN-Habitat, including at the World Festival of Youth and Students, held in Sochi in October 2017, and at the 2018 Moscow Urban Forum.

74. The Moscow office of UN-Habitat had recently become the subregional division for project coordination in the Commonwealth of Independent States. That change of status would help to increase programme implementation at the regional level, with financial support from the Russian Federation.

75. Lastly, his delegation expressed its appreciation to the Executive Director for agreeing to participate in the work of the Expert Council for Sustainable Development of the Urban Environment under the Russian Ministry of Construction, Housing and Public Utilities.

76. **Ms. Lora-santos** (Philippines) said that her delegation supported the ongoing efforts to strengthen UN-Habitat for the effective implementation of its mandate, particularly with respect to the New Urban Agenda. Her Government was committed to the robust implementation of the New Urban Agenda and to a strong, transparent and efficient UN-Habitat in line with the ongoing reforms within the United Nations.

77. While half of the population of the Philippines currently lived in cities, urban dwellers were expected to account for up to 84 per cent of the national population by 2050. Rapid urbanization was an indication of economic development, but it also led to challenges related to increased demand for jobs, housing, infrastructure and basic services. Development frameworks had therefore been adopted to address those challenges for urban and urbanizing areas. The aim was to make urban spaces more inclusive and to create more open, connected and collectively resilient communities.

78. The New Urban Agenda had itself been localized through the national development plan for the period 2017–2022. Her Government's partnership with UN-Habitat, particularly in the area of climate resilience, had assisted in enhancing the technical capacity both of local governments and of the national Government. The work of UN-Habitat on the ground had also empowered local actors to address the New Urban Agenda.

79. **Mr. Tan** (Singapore) said that his country had always sought to balance environmental sustainability with economic development and social inclusion. That entailed a holistic, long-term and integrated approach to urban planning, underpinned by collaborative multi-stakeholder partnerships. Examples included the Smart Urban Habitat Masterplan, developed by government agencies and the private sector to make towns more livable, efficient and sustainable; the "super low energy" programme introduced to encourage cost-efficient and energy-efficient designs; and the "cities of tomorrow" programme designed to encourage investment in research and development efforts across all disciplines involved in the built environment. Furthermore, as the Chair of ASEAN, Singapore had championed the ASEAN Smart Cities Network, which provided a joint framework to leverage innovate technological solutions for the development of smart cities in the region.

80. To achieve Sustainable Development Goal 11 and fully implement the New Urban Agenda, Governments would similarly need to jointly leverage technology and advance innovative solutions in collaboration with other countries and stakeholders. Singapore was committed to sharing its experiences, programmes and partnerships with fellow developing countries in the spirit of South-South cooperation, and to ensuring that no one and no city was left behind.

81. **Mr. Muhammad Bande** (Nigeria) said that implementing the New Urban Agenda could accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and targets. His delegation welcomed the increased understanding of the central role that cities played in sustainable development and was also pleased to note that UN-Habitat was supporting the efforts of the Economic Commission for Africa to integrate urbanization into national development planning, with a focus on strengthening economic and spatial policies in line with Agenda 2063 of the African Union and Sustainable Development Goal 11.

82. The 2030 Agenda presented an opportunity to build well-planned, inclusive, equitable, economically productive and resilient settlements in cities and in rural areas. The right to adequate housing went beyond building houses to promoting access for all to adequate, safe and affordable housing. However, urgent remedial strategies were needed to address the phenomenal rate at which urbanization was taking place in developing countries, especially in Africa. In that regard, UN-Habitat would continue to provide valuable assistance in defining the focus and direction of national initiatives for the development of sustainable human settlements.

83. To address rapid urbanization in Nigeria and the concomitant implications for youth unemployment, the Government was consciously implementing its integrated Change Agenda in which plans, policies, and programmes had been outlined to empower Nigerians and improve their standard of living. National housing and urban development policies had also been revised to meet the needs of Nigerians, with due consideration given to women, youth and vulnerable groups.

84. His Government remained committed to the Abuja Declaration for Habitat III, adopted at the Africa Regional Preparatory Conference for Habitat III in 2016. Recognizing that every Nigerian had the right to decent accommodation, regardless of social status or place of residence, the Government was seeking to reduce the housing deficit and to boost the number of mortgages. Innovative approaches were also being adopted to address such issues as slum eradication, urban sprawl and access to basic services. For example, under the UN-Habitat Water for African Cities Programme, clean drinking water was being supplied to people in the peri-urban areas of the city of Jos in Nigeria.

85. **Mr. Kafle** (Nepal) said that the establishment of peaceful, inclusive, resilient and sustainable human settlements required the timely, effective and full implementation of the New Urban Agenda. It would therefore be necessary to make UN-Habitat fit-for-purpose, including by improving its governance structure, so that it could better assist Member States in tackling the challenges of sustainable urbanization. A balance should also be maintained between core and earmarked funding to support the activities of UN-Habitat.

86. Like many other developing countries, Nepal was experiencing a rapid pace of urbanization and was facing a number of challenges, primarily due to the rural-to-urban-migration of people in search of economic opportunities and better lives. Moreover, as a landlocked least developed country emerging from conflict and prone to natural disasters, Nepal was cognizant of the fact that it needed to have comprehensive and forward-looking urban plans and policies which also integrated resilience-building programmes.

87. While the Constitution of Nepal stated that housing was a fundamental right, in order for that principle to become a reality it would be necessary to implement the relevant national urban plans and policies and, with the support of UN-Habitat, to adapt the New Urban Agenda to local urban plans and policies. Accordingly, his Government was working closely with all stakeholders at the national and local levels to make Nepalese cities both resilient and sustainable. However, those efforts would also need to be complemented by international cooperation in the form of investment, technology transfer and capacity-building support.

88. **Ms. Engelbrecht Schadtler** (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) said that, in order to continue strengthening the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, it was necessary to reiterate the importance of international cooperation, particularly the commitments undertaken by developed countries with respect to financing and technology transfer.

89. Her Government was committed to urban planning that respected the environment and was seeking to provide housing for all, particularly the most vulnerable persons, thereby contributing to the eradication of poverty in accordance with the 2030 Agenda.

90. Access to housing was a constitutional right and a shared obligation between citizens and the Government, which ensured that the necessary social policies were in place. For example, under the Great Venezuelan Housing Mission, 2.1 million homes had been distributed to families in need since 2011, and under the Great Mission Barrio Nuevo–Barrio Tricolor some 644,422 homes had been restored for over 2.8 million Venezuelans.

91. Despite the economic challenges that had drastically reduced the budgetary funds available, her Government remained committed to providing decent housing to every family in Venezuela that needed it.

92. **Mr. Irawan** (Indonesia) said that the international community must move quickly to plan for sustainable urban growth and to provide basic services, infrastructure and affordable housing. In particular, local actions must be supported to plan, manage and implement transformative policies under the New Urban Agenda.

93. Local governments had a vital role to play in decision-making and their collaboration with local populations had proven effective in creating greener, cleaner and healthier cities. However, many local governments in developing countries needed capacity-building and support in planning, financing, developing, building, governing and managing their cities.

94. It was also important to make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, sustainable and resilient, particularly to address the adverse impacts of climate change. In order to reduce such vulnerabilities, increased cooperation was needed between States and the United Nations system in the area of disaster risk reduction and management as well as climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts. UN-Habitat should

develop action plans for rebuilding cities and human settlements struck by natural disasters.

95. His delegation fully supported the reform of the governance system of UN-Habitat proposed by the open-ended working group, which would strengthen oversight by Member States and attract sustainable and predictable funding for the organization.

96. **Mr. Lu** Yuhui (China) said that the building of sustainable cities and human settlements should take into account the level of economic development and population growth, and the international community, particularly developed countries, should take steps in that regard to help developing countries build the necessary capacities. His delegation supported the coordinating role played by UN-Habitat in promoting sustainable urban development worldwide and the achievement of the relevant Sustainable Development Goals.

97. Reform of UN-Habitat should improve the efficiency and strengthen the capacities of UN-Habitat to better assist Member States, especially developing countries; maintain the intergovernmental nature of UN-Habitat, be guided and led by Member States and have its decisions agreed upon by Member State by consensus; focus on development and on meeting the needs and addressing the concerns of developing countries; and uphold the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities to ensure adequate funding.

98. His Government had embraced the development concepts of innovation, coordination, the green economy, openness and shared benefits. Urbanization had been a strong driver for the economic growth over China, which had experienced the most rapid pace and largest scale of urbanization in the world over the past 40 years. Moving forward, his Government would work with the international community to address the challenges of global urbanization.

99. **Mr. Fox-Drummond Gough** (Brazil) said that sustainable cities must be inclusive, affordable, accessible, safe and resilient, in accordance with the main principles of the right to cities. The implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the urban related Sustainable Development Goals depended on the active involvement of multiple stakeholders, in particular local governments and civil society. However, in order to adequately respond to the challenges posed by the New Urban Agenda and the Goals, the United Nations agencies and programmes involved with urban development, particularly UN-Habitat, must be strengthened.

100. His delegation commended the open-ended working group established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 72/226 for examining options to strengthen the oversight of UN-Habitat and for considering the appropriateness of its financial rules and regulations, as well as personnel, procurement and budgetary matters. The set of findings and recommendations agreed by the working group represented a carefully crafted compromise. In particular, the recommended governance structure would greatly help to overcome not only the discrepancy between normative and operational functions, but also the disproportion between non-earmarked core funding and technical cooperation funds. The new structure would also allow UN-Habitat to address its dire financial challenges.

101. However, as the implications of any reform to the current structure were complex, colleagues in Nairobi who were more familiar with the challenges and needs of UN-Habitat had been requested to engage in specific negotiations to propose a framework for the reforms. In the meantime, it would be important to retain the package agreed in the findings and recommendations of the working group and to avoid repeating the discussions that had already taken place in Nairobi as that that would risk further delaying the reform of UN-Habitat.

102. **Mr. Abebe** (Ethiopia) said that the New Urban Agenda reaffirmed the global commitment to sustainable urban development and its implementation could accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. In order to address urban realities, it was also important to fully implement the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the Paris Agreement and the other internationally agreed development frameworks. His delegation therefore welcomed the coordinating role played by UN-Habitat within the United Nations system.

103. The full implementation of the New Urban Agenda required a paradigm shift at the national, regional and international levels. While preserving its intergovernmental nature, a reformed UN-Habitat had an important role to play in supporting the implementation efforts of developing countries, particularly the least developed countries. UN-Habitat should therefore be provided with more political and financial support.

104. His Government had been continuing to implement the New Urban Agenda through a comprehensive urban development package that was focused on matters such as decentralization, housing, small and medium enterprises, and social and physical

infrastructure. The Government's integrated housing programme had been successful in addressing the housing shortage, creating job opportunities for youth and expanding the construction sector. Meanwhile, UN-Habitat had been providing normative and technical assistance for the programme, alongside the bilateral and multilateral development partners of Ethiopia.

105. To address the problem of urban unemployment, the Government had also been implementing an entrepreneurship strategy that aimed to create an enabling business environment, including through the provision of training and credit services.

106. Urban transformation could be a catalyst for economic growth and development. The Government would therefore be redoubling its efforts to pursue a sustainable urban development agenda that benefited all sections of society. Such national efforts to implement the New Urban Agenda should be supported by the United Nations and other development partners, particularly in the areas of urban finance and technology transfer.

107. **Mr. Andanje** (Kenya) said that his country was privileged to host UN-Habitat in Nairobi and highly valued the contribution that it made to sustainable urbanization around the world. Over the years, the responsibilities of UN-Habitat had changed considerably in terms of their scope and complexity. His delegation welcomed the role played by UN-Habitat in developing international norms and assisting national Governments to meet their agreed commitments, including under the New Urban Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. It also appreciated the contribution made around the world by UN-Habitat to improving basic services, such as waste management, water supply, sanitation, access to renewable energy and sustainable transport.

108. After 14 years of discussions on how to reform UN-Habitat, the findings and recommendations of the open-ended working group provided an opportunity for decisive action to address its dire financial situation. Only a strengthened UN-Habitat would be able to fulfil its expanded mandate. In that context, his delegation called on Member States to support the relevant draft resolution on UN-Habitat to be put forward at the current session and to adopt a holistic, practical and constructive approach during the negotiating process. With the support of Member States, the new Executive Director of UN-Habitat would succeed in reforming the organization so that it could better deliver on its mandate.

109. Commending Sweden and Norway for providing significant funding to facilitate the change process at UN-Habitat and expressing his gratitude to Malaysia for pledging $1 million in non-earmarked funding and $250,000 in earmarked funding to UN-Habitat, he said that it was very clear that the Executive Director was building trust with Member States through a consultative approach characterized by openness, transparency and accountability.

110. **Mr. Mayong Onon** (Malaysia) said that rapid and unbridled city growth and urban migration, if not properly addressed and managed, could exacerbate socioeconomic inequalities. Given the need to address such emerging urban challenges, his delegation supported the Executive Director's proposed reform of UN-Habitat and other efforts to improve its transparency, accountability, effectiveness and efficiency.

111. Malaysia had made a major contribution to the international community's efforts to implement the New Urban Agenda by hosting the ninth session of the World Urban Forum in February 2018. It supported the Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Cities 2030, which outlined actionable recommendations to accelerate the New Urban Agenda and called for an enhanced role for UN-Habitat as a focal point within the United Nations system.

112. His Government recognized the synergies between the New Urban Agenda, the 2030 Agenda, the Paris Agreement, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda and the Sendai Framework. It also acknowledged the need for strong cooperation and strategic collaboration to address the diverse challenges of urbanization.

113. **Mr. Alami** (Morocco) said that the rapid rate of urbanization in his country, which currently stood at 60.3 per cent, was explained by a combination of population growth, urban migration, the creation of new urban centres and urban sprawl. Cities were major hubs of job creation, driving economic, social and technological development, but they were also the greatest sources of environmental stress and social disparities.

114. His Government was committed to sustainable development and had made notable progress towards the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 11, including by eradicating slums, restructuring disadvantaged neighbourhoods and diversifying housing options. It had also enacted legislation to improve energy efficiency in buildings and, in September 2016, had submitted its intended nationally determined contribution under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, with a target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 17 per cent by 2030. The expected mitigation effort by

the residential and tertiary sector to achieve the overall target between 2020 and 2030 was 7.6 per cent.

115. While multiple challenges related to sustainable urban management remained to be addressed in Morocco, his Government stood ready to share its relevant experience within the framework of South-South cooperation, reiterated its commitment to UN-Habitat and called for increased financial resources to be mobilized to support its work.

116. **Mr. Tōnē** (Tonga) said that effective partnerships were critical for empowering cities to address the multiple challenges they faced, especially in small island developing States with limited resources such as Tonga. His Government specifically wished to thank the European Union, the Asian Development Bank and the Government of Australia for the genuine and durable partnerships that had contributed to its effort to promote sustainable urbanization.

117. Tonga fully supported the ongoing work of the United Nations and UN-Habitat. As an accelerator for the achievement of all the Sustainable Development Goals, in particular Goal 11, the New Urban Agenda offered a welcome opportunity for the global community to address the urgent challenges associated with growing inequalities, social exclusion, extreme poverty, high unemployment and increased risks from climate change.

118. Like other Pacific small island developing States, Tonga had cities and urban settlement in coastal and low-lying areas that were particularly vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change. More focused efforts were needed to find ways to ensure that their urban settlements were inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

119. At the national level, the Government had enacted the National Spatial Planning and Management Act of 2012 and had established the Urban Management Agency to promote communities that were resilient and had better access to basic services.

120. *Mr. Remaoun (Algeria) took the Chair.*

121. **Mr. Akamba** (Cameroon) said that cities were drivers of socioeconomic development that offered significant opportunities while also posing grave challenges. Cameroon had fully endorsed the vision of sustainable urban development adopted under the New Urban Agenda and had aligned its national policies with the decisions taken within the framework of Habitat III.

122. His Government aimed to promote the emergence of peripheral areas and the development of cities where people could carry out economic activities in a fair, inclusive and environmentally friendly manner. However, the rapid rate of urban population growth in Cameroon was posing challenges related to housing, security, transport and the supply of vital resources. In response, a number of steps had been taken at the national level to foster partnerships, manage urban growth, protect the environment, promote reasonable land use and address the housing shortage, including a social housing scheme under which 10,000 new homes were being built in Youndé and Douala. Land banks were also financing the construction of thousands of public housing units.

123. Despite the Government's ongoing reform efforts, a lack of sufficient financial and technological resources was impeding sustainable urban development in Cameroon. It therefore welcomed two cooperation agreements recently concluded with UN-Habitat for additional urban development funds and called for increased international cooperation within the framework of the United Nations to build smart and green cities. To that end, the role of UN-Habitat should be significantly strengthened, its mandate expanded and the appropriate level of funding provided.

124. **Ms. Al-Ali** (United Arab Emirates) said that young people were not only the future, but also the present. Her Government had established youth councils to involve young people in decision-making on issues of concern to them. Her country's experience had shown that pluralism, peaceful coexistence and tolerance were essential to sustainable development in an urban environment. Women, children, young people, older persons and persons with disabilities all should have access to the possibilities offered by life in cities.

125. The United Arab Emirates had established Masdar City in Abu Dhabi, a carbon-neutral city that used primarily solar energy and had already become an international hub of research and commerce. In the past year, it had also launched the Imagine Abu Dhabi initiative to solicit innovative ideas for future planning and investment. The United Arab Emirates-Caribbean Renewable Energy Fund was a model for international cooperation to address climate change. In February 2018, Dubai had hosted the first Arab Land Conference, which had issued recommendations in a number of areas, including the rights of farmers and women. The World Bank's Doing Business 2018 report had ranked the United Arab Emirates tenth globally and first among Arab States in the "registering property" category. Her country would be the first Arab country to host the World Urban Forum in 2020, during its tenth session, which would coincide with her country's golden jubilee.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

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Summary record of the joint meeting of the Second Committee and the Economic and Social Council on "The Circular Economy for the Sustainable Development goals: From Concept to Practice"

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Wednesday, 10 October 2018, at 3 p.m.

Co-Chair: Mr. Skinner-Klée Arenales (Chair, Second Committee) . . . . . (Guatemala)
Co-Chair: Ms King (President, Economic and Social Council) . . . . . (Saint Vincent and the Grenadines)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Opening statements

1. **Ms. King** (Co-Chair) said that the joint meeting would focus on the shift away from a linear economy of "take, make, consume and throw away" towards a circular economy. At the heart of a circular economy was the idea of waste redefined and new business models and product designs. The focus of the event was particularly relevant and built on discussions held during the high-level political forum on sustainable development in July 2018, especially the in-depth review of Sustainable Development Goal 12 on sustainable consumption and production.

2. A growing population was committed to making a shift in patterns of production and consumption, a structural change that was necessary to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for a more sustainable and just world. The world would have one billion more inhabitants by 2030, with a concomitant drastic increase in the demand for natural resources and raw materials. Meanwhile, domestic consumption was steadily increasing worldwide in both developing and developed countries. Humanity was using up the resources of the world at a rate 1.7 times faster than its ecosystems could regenerate. However, through joint action, it would be possible to transition away from an economic model that put the planet and future at risk.

3. German economist E.F. Schumacher had maintained decades ago that humanity needed a lifestyle designed for permanence, warning against the sense that humans were separate from nature and must battle and conquer it. If humans won that battle, they would find themselves on the losing side. Astonishing scientific and technological achievements had given humanity the illusion of unlimited powers with a concurrent illusion of having solved the problem of production. That illusion was based on a confusion between the concepts of income and capital. The capital that was not made by man, but merely found, was irreplaceable. Without it, man could do nothing. The modern industrial system consumed the very basis on which it had been built, treating capital as income.

4. The circular economy model endeavoured to change mindsets and went far beyond the achievement of Sustainable Goal 12, extending to Sustainable Goal 7 on affordable and clean energy, Goal 8 on decent work and economic growth, Goal 11 on sustainable cities and communities, Goal 13 on climate action, Goal 14 on oceans and Goal 15 on life on land. That model promised vast economic opportunities, including the creation of additional revenue from existing products and processes and the potential to spur innovation and reduce operating costs.

5. The first panel discussion would focus on the policies, platforms and partnerships necessary to enable the shift towards a circular economy. As the related global movement gained momentum, there were important opportunities ahead to highlight tangible solutions in support of the transition away from unsustainable economic models.

6. When the high-level political forum was convened in September 2019 under the auspices of the General Assembly, Heads of State and Government would meet again to discuss innovative solutions and reaffirm their commitment to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda. The circular economy must be an integral part of those discussions and experiences, and best practices must be shared to accelerate the change that was so urgently needed.

7. **Mr. Skinner-Klée Arenales** (Co-Chair) said that recent decades had seen unprecedented growth in the demand for resources, driven by the rapid industrialization of emerging economies and continued high levels of material consumption in developed countries. World population was set to exceed 9 billion by 2050, further straining that demand. The current linear economic system led to environmental degradation, resource depletion, waste and pollution, and extreme inequality. A smart, cross-sectoral economic system with attractive opportunities for sustainable, socially equitable growth was required.

8. To implement the Sustainable Development Goals, it would be necessary to harness synergies and complementarities and consider potential trade-offs. The circular economy built synergy and could solve local and global overconsumption challenges, create jobs and solve problems, including health and sanitation problems, in developing countries. The greening of production, resource efficiency, energy transitions and the promotion of multilateral environmental agreements would foster environmentally sustainable growth.

9. Shifting to a circular economy could also advance poverty eradication and inclusiveness by building productive capacity and increasing opportunities for all. The transition would involve interaction between sectors and countries in parallel with technology trends like digitalization and automation. Both positive and negative interactions must be considered to prepare relevant responses.

10. Current patterns of consumption and production threatened the well-being of future generations and the

achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. On a planet of finite resources, the transition to a circular economy was imperative and represented an unprecedented opportunity for growth and prosperity.

11. **Mr. Thomson** (United Nations Special Envoy for the Ocean), speaking via video link, said that the elevation of the subject at hand so early in the General Assembly session was commendable. Embedding the principles of the circular economy into consumption and production regimes would be the key transition required for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The linear economy model was simply not sustainable on a planet with finite resources that would eventually be exhausted.

12. The use of land and sea as dumping grounds for the vast waste produced by the linear model was polluting the very fundament of the environment that sustained life. The extent of that pollution was already exhibiting major negative implications for the well-being of humanity. In his role as the United Nations Special Envoy for the Oceans, he was confronted with the consequences of the linear economy every day, particularly in the form of marine plastic pollution, which had reached unconscionable levels. Ending the plague of plastic pollution would require a massive and collective global effort.

13. Solutions existed — one prominent one was the circular economy. Plastic was a wonder product of human ingenuity and would be in use for many generations to come. However, that plastic must be the right kind: truly recyclable and/or truly biodegradable. It must be put to the right uses. Humanity must urgently end its irresponsible addiction to single-use plastic. Governments, cities and communities taking the lead in that regard were to be commended.

14. The replacement of linear economy models by circular economy models was under positive discussion in the cabinets of Governments and the boardrooms of companies. It was timely for the Second Committee and the Economic and Social Council to focus their ideas, resources and energy on the advancement of the circular economy, a logical approach to humanity's interaction with the limited resources of planet Earth.

Panel discussion on Theme 1: "Policies and platforms supporting the transition to a circular economy"

15. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director, Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance), moderator, said that he had travelled to the meeting from his farm in Vermont. If he could have brought a prop, it would have been the horse manure from his farm, because schoolchildren visiting the farm were always fascinated by the mushrooms growing from it. Those mushrooms killed bacteria and could be useful to scientists in fighting off superbugs, a great example of designing out pollution and using waste for benefit. Humanity needed to come to terms with its waste. At the Black Rock Forest Consortium, waste from composting toilets was used to grow plants and flowers. Both were great examples of the circular economy.

16. Most people were not yet familiar with the concept of the circular economy. Simple and efficient communication to the public would be important. The three-point definition of the MacArthur Foundation was very accessible: design out waste and pollution; keep products and materials in use; and regenerate natural systems.

17. Health and economic benefits were the message being used to promote tap water over bottled water and air dryers over paper towels. Those choices had environmental and ethical benefits as well, but health and economic benefits were being touted first and foremost.

18. According to the Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, only 12 years remained to address climate change and create a more sustainable world. Greenhouse gas emissions must be halved from 2010 levels; renewable energy must be tripled. The task was urgent, dire and monumental. Both people in the street and celebrities had taken notice of the warnings in the report. The situation was now resonating with the public. That was also the purpose of the joint Second Committee/Economic and Social Council meeting.

19. There were myriad ways to fix the problems ahead by 2030. Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance was at the vanguard of climate leadership among cities globally and had released a report entitled Game Changers: Bold Actions by Cities to Accelerate Progress Toward Carbon Neutrality, on the seven ways cities could change the game systematically and structurally. Paul Hawken had also been a pioneer in thinking on the circular economy with his book *Project Drawdown*, so those ideas were familiar. People knew they had to reduce meat consumption, eschew fast fashion and reduce family sizes. The question was how to engage civil society and promote the required behavioural and cultural changes. It had to be cool to reuse clothing, have only one pair of dress shoes, eat a primarily plant-based diet and use public transit. People were self-centred, however, they had been convinced to use tap water and air dryers for their hands with the promise of being healthier, saving money and saving time. In promoting the circular

economy and encouraging people to reduce, reuse and recycle, and regenerate natural systems, it would be helpful to focus on health and economics and sometimes, security. He invited the panellists to make their presentations.

20. **Mr. de Cuba** (Founder, Circular Economy Platform of the Americas and Circular Economy Forum of the Americas), panellist, accompanying his statement with a digital slide presentation, said that there were many definitions of the circular economy. When the Ellen MacArthur Foundation began popularizing the term, there had been a merging of schools of thought to find a coherent definition. Natural capitalism, cradle-to-cradle design, biomimicry and regenerative design were among the seven schools of thought that were fundamental to the circular economy. A new, coherent definition of the circular economy must now be established to achieve concerted action and results in the public sector, private sector, academia and civil society.

21. The main purpose of the Circular Economy Platform of the Americas and Circular Economy Forum of the Americas, comprising 35 experts, was to strengthen regional capacities and understand local conditions and needs to find the most pragmatic way to implement solutions compatible with the circular economy. Catching up to European universities, many universities in the Americas had begun designing programmes for related specializations. The focus of the group was to build awareness of the value of the circular economy for regions and individuals in specific economic sectors. The Circular Economy Forum of the Americas was the main event organized for that purpose; efforts were under way to make it the centre of excellence for pioneers, believers and practitioners to meet, exchange knowledge, and leverage and bring about new ideas and programmes with a common definition of the circular economy. He extended an invitation to all to join the Circular Economy Forum of the Americas in November 2018 in Santiago de Chile to participate in the ongoing regional dialogue.

22. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director, Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance) asked what the biggest policy barriers were in the Americas and how they were being confronted.

23. **Mr. de Cuba** (Founder, Circular Economy Platform of the Americas and Circular Economy Forum of the Americas) said that he had worked for the Organization of American States for seven years and under its auspices, had led Closed Looped Cycle Production in the Americas, the first regional programme on applying circular economy thinking. From a technical point of view, raw materials were being assessed and proper design was being implemented to ensure that new products could be recuperated cost-effectively, and that the old products could be broken down, effectively recycled and reinserted into production systems. It was notable that the circular economy was capturing much more attention within ministries of the economy, industry and production than ministries of the environment. The former saw the circular economy as an opportunity for improved productivity, positioning, competitiveness and innovation.

24. However, many people immediately linked the circular economy with recycling when, in fact, the issue transcended waste. It was important to recognize that the real challenge was ensuring that a suite of existing products already in the market was usefully employed. Going forward, favourable market and economic conditions must be in place to truly close the loop and achieve multiplicity within biological or technical cycles. The circular economy was merely one helpful element in the discussion. The goal was not to diminish negative impacts such as pollution; the circular economy offered an opportunity to go beyond that and create value. Value creation was a key concept.

25. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director, Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance) enquired about the creation of university programmes on the circular economy to help raise awareness in civil society.

26. **Mr. de Cuba** (Founder, Circular Economy Platform of the Americas and Circular Economy Forum of the Americas) said that awareness creation regarding those programmes was disorganized and sporadic; a common regional goal must first be defined to avoid the futile propagation of mixed messages to the public. There was an urgent need to reach consensus on the definition of the circular economy if effective, long-term results were to be achieved.

27. **Ms. Lakatos** (President, Ernest Lupan Institute for Research in Circular Economy and Environment), panellist, accompanying her statement with a digital slide presentation, said that the topic of the circular economy was relevant to all United Nations actions. The current model of growth had miraculously elevated millions out of poverty to a prosperous and rewarding life. However, its long-term viability was being questioned. The planet was being destroyed at breath-taking speed and scope, particularly since the end of the Second World War. It was time to rethink the global economic model to drive prosperity within the capacity of the planet and in line with the concept of the circular economy. That concept encompassed a zero waste system and the biosphere, technosphere, and

humanosphere, where all 17 Sustainable Development Goals were relevant to the creation of a regenerative, inclusive system design. The European Systemic Approach for Regions Transitioning towards a Circular Economy focused on the value of products and materials and the minimization of waste generation for long-term social and environmental gains.

28. Departing from that premise, in a joint initiative by the European Commission and the European Economic and Social Committee, the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform had been created. Its purpose was to advance the concept of the circular economy among member States and communicate with stakeholders, including businesses, civil society, trade unions, and local governments. It aimed to foster cooperation among stakeholder networks in order to facilitate the exchange of expertise and best practices and identify social, economic and cultural barriers to the transition towards the circular economy. The user-friendly platform was managed by the European Commission and coordinated by its members. It enabled searches for best practices, studies and national strategies, and guests could contribute their own experiences.

29. The work of the Ernest Lupan Institute for Research in Circular Economy and Environment had three focuses: exchanging best practices, fostering dialogue and providing knowledge, and identifying buyers. It had launched two studies on how social enterprises could contribute to a systemic circular economy and an analysis of the behaviour related to branding. At the European level, it had mapped over 150 good practices, most focused on waste management and secondary raw materials. Barriers to the implementation of circular economy measures derived mainly from lack of sufficiency, inadequate legislation and weaknesses in education, including the failure to emphasize circular thinking and behaviour and innovation. No more waste, new jobs, the creation of shared value and the development of a sustainable world: those were the opportunities a circular economy would provide.

30. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director, Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance) asked Ms. Lakatos to provide examples of good practices, along with guidance on how the public could access the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform website to search for them.

31. **Ms. Lakatos** (President, Ernest Lupan Institute for Research in Circular Economy and Environment) said that in steel production, free enthalpy could enable the regeneration of raw materials. In the textile industry, materials could be reused in construction or by protecting them in a different way.

32. It was easy to find good practices on the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform website or by emailing. The public could also upload their own good practices, which would be evaluated. If determined to be sound, they would be added to the Platform.

33. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director, Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance) asked Ms. Lakatos what gave her hope under circumstances that might seem grim.

34. **Ms. Lakatos** (President, Ernest Lupan Institute for Research in Circular Economy and Environment) said that the results of a project in Romania had given her hope. A food bank had been prepared to reuse wasted supermarket food in public schools and for the homeless. However, legislative limits to those uses remained and work must still be done to overcome them.

35. She was also filled with hope when she saw small and medium-sized enterprises approaching her organization for assistance in implementing the circular economy, including a company reclaiming used oil from hotels and restaurants. Technology had advanced to a point where reclamation was possible. Those successes were encouraging in the face of such challenging work.

36. **Mr. Anukam** (Director General, National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency, Nigeria), panellist, accompanying his statement with a digital slide presentation, said that he wished to address the circular economy from the governmental and environmental protection perspective. He had dealt with the issue of waste in those capacities for many years and had noted an interesting paradigm shift around its definition. Years before, one country had insisted that waste should no longer be labelled as such but rather should be called a secondary resource. At one time, plastic had been hailed as the greatest creation of science; now, views about plastic were changing. Certain chemicals had been produced to help humanity; now, it had been acknowledged that some were carcinogenic. The linear economy was now being viewed as a problem when contrasted with the circular economy. The environment was all-encompassing, and any change in its state, positive or negative, would exact a significant influence on ecosystem integrity, including the health and well-being of the living organisms within it. That was a lived reality.

37. The linear economy was causing many problems, including land degradation from quarrying, air pollution from burning waste, water pollution from effluents and waste streams, and homes, industries and cities affected by electronic waste. Seas and oceans were being impacted, all because of growing populations and design problems. Cancer, endocrine system disruptions,

reproductive impairments, children born with brain damage or other effects of neurotoxicity, and the suppression of immune systems, were all the result of the chemicals introduced into the environment because of linear systems of production and consumption.

38. However, tracing the history of the emergence of sustainable development, he said that the first question asked had been how businesses could be sustainable. During the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 2012, the idea of the green economy as the complement to sustainable development had been born after much discussion. The Marrakesh Process had promoted the notion of sustainable consumption and production early on. The focus was now on the circular economy, a cradle-to-cradle approach to improve efficiency of resource use and achieve greater harmony between the economy, environment and society. The old paradigm had been cradle-to-grave.

39. In Nigeria, the Extended Producer Responsibility programme had been established by the National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency to extend the physical and/or financial responsibility of producers to the post-consumer stage of a product's life cycle. The programme promoted the integration of environmental costs associated with goods throughout their life cycle into their market price. It placed a priority focus on end-of-use treatment of consumer products to increase the amount and degree of product recovery and minimize the environmental impact of waste materials. The programme's benefits included its promotion of waste avoidance and effective pollution prevention and reduction; treatment of waste as a resource; wealth creation and promotion of green jobs; improvement of producers' environmental performance; opportunities for innovation, learning and application of global best practices; improvement of environmental quality; and above all, promotion of responsible life cycle product management through the take-back system, recycling and final disposal of waste.

40. Government agencies, producer responsibility organizations, producers, recyclers, collectors, informal collectors and consumers were the key stakeholders in the implementation of the Extended Producer Responsibility programme. The role of the National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency was to enforce extant take-back laws and regulations, establish environmental standards, review and approve stewardship plans, promote the programme, monitor producer responsibility organizations created by the private sector, and promote a level playing field by ensuring the compliance of all stakeholders, national and multinational, with established requirements.

41. The National Alliance on Sustainable Consumption and Production brought together all key government agencies involved in consumption and production and business organizations. Thus far, producer responsibility organizations from the beverage and the electronics sectors had been registered. Other waste streams would be targeted going forward.

42. His agency was working with organizations internationally to promote the process. A proposal was under development in conjunction with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to support the implementation of the programme in Nigeria.

43. The way forward must include active private sector participation in the Extended Producer Responsibility programme, especially by multinational companies, and discouragement of the use of developing countries as a dumping ground for substandard products and end-of-life waste. Equity dictated that waste from one part of the world could not be dumped in another part of the world that lacked the resources and capacity to contend with that waste. That was not a balanced approach.

44. Global and regional knowledge-sharing platforms, stable global markets for secondary raw materials, and scaled up efforts to implement relevant multilateral environmental agreements would be essential to the promotion of the circular economy. Banned chemicals must not transit either directly or indirectly from one country to another. Eco-industrial parks must be developed and, above all, public awareness must be increased.

45. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director, Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance) asked whether participating producers had become enthusiastic messengers for the Extended Producer Responsibility programme agenda. He also wondered whether consumers were changing their purchasing practices to support the industries that were participating in the programme.

46. **Mr. Anukam** (Director General, National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency, Nigeria) said that the level of interest and willingness among industry stakeholders had been most encouraging. The producer responsibility organization for the beverage sector had been extremely enthusiastic and had set up its management system and registered as a legal entity with support from the Government. The model was private sector-driven and was functioning independently, with occasional guidance from the

National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency.

47. Consumer awareness had been growing and was dependent on literacy levels and outreach efforts. UNEP had chosen "Beat plastic pollution" as the theme of World Environment Day 2018, which had excited great interest in Nigeria and helped raise awareness. The participation of all stakeholders was key in that effort.

48. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director, Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance) invited questions from the floor. He noted that the United Nations gift shop did not seem to feature fair trade, organic products. That should be remedied, as the United Nations should exemplify the principles of the circular economy.

49. **Ms. Emet** (Nigeria) said that the size of her country's population, the seventh largest worldwide and the largest in Africa, meant that a great deal of consumption and production took place there. She asked whether the good practices mentioned by Ms. Lakatos could be replicated in a region like Africa, where the population sizes, development landscape, culture, social understanding, educational levels and economic construct were quite different. Her second question, directed to Mr. Anukam, was what pushback or challenges, and what opportunities, he had encountered in his work, whether at the government, policy, legislative or practical level.

50. **Ms. Loe** (Norway) said that she wished to highlight the issue of marine litter, one of the fastest-growing environmental issues. Every minute, 15 tons of litter entered the oceans, with more than 80 per cent originating from land-based sources. Improvements in waste management were urgently needed and should be a key priority. Marine litter crossed borders. For example, a whale had been discovered dead and full of plastic off the Norwegian coast. Collective action must be taken by Governments, industry, civil society, consumers, academia and international organizations like the United Nations to combat it, and industry must be engaged in the production of new forms of plastic that were not simply discarded into the oceans.

51. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director, Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance) said that the comment by Ms. Loe highlighted the point made by Mr. de Cuba, namely, that recycling was not sufficient to solve those problems and that even recycled plastics and fashion were creating complex problems.

52. **Ms. Elgarf** (Egypt), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that the circular economy was not part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, although it was a concept that could accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Unfortunately, the 2018 high-level political forum had shown that, three years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the current pace of progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals was inadequate. Strengthened means of implementation and an enabling global environment, particularly for developing countries, were needed in light of the scale and level of ambition of the 2030 Agenda. That included sustainable financing options, global partnerships and long-term investment. While acknowledging that the 2030 Agenda was indivisible, she underscored the need to step up efforts for the full implementation of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns, with the developed countries taking the lead. Decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation in accordance with that Framework was an ongoing challenge which would require a profound transformation of business practices and global value chains, especially by large, transnational corporations. It was becoming increasingly important for those corporations to adopt sustainable practices and integrate sustainability information into their reporting cycles.

53. The Group of 77 and China also wished to emphasize the need for enhanced contributions to progressively improve global resource efficiency and consumption and production. Developed countries must take the lead in decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation, while creating decent jobs and economic opportunities and contributing to poverty eradication.

54. She recalled the common determination to protect the planet from degradation, ensuring that people everywhere had the relevant information and awareness for sustainable development lifestyles in harmony with nature. Developing countries needed financial and technical assistance to strengthen financial and technology capacity for more sustainable consumption and production patterns. The Group of 77 and China reaffirmed its constructive engagement with its partners in pursuit of the common aim of achieving sustainable development for all.

55. **Ms. Zeitler** (Observer for the European Union) said that her delegation welcomed the raising of the circular economy for discussion. It was an important issue not only to achieve the objective of decoupling economic growth from environmental degradation, a major challenge highlighted by the ministerial declaration of the 2018 high-level political forum, but also for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and tackling climate change. A recent study estimated that

circular economy measures could reduce global emissions by 3.6 billion tons per year by 2050. Circular economy measures would further the implementation of both the 2030 Agenda and the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. That was a key point in light of the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

56. Decoupling would be a boon to prosperity and economic development while reducing resource needs. According to a study by the International Resource Panel, it was possible to improve resource efficiency, leading to a reduction in extractions while boosting economic activity globally. The European Union wished to demonstrate that achieving prosperity while reducing pressure on the environment was possible. With that in mind, a comprehensive circular economy package had been released in 2015 with a very ambitious programme of action covering the life cycle of products from design, waste management and recycling to the market for secondary raw materials. An important element was the application of the circular economy approach to the plastics sector, a key sector for all economies. The European Strategy for Plastics in a Circular Economy had been released in January 2018 and UNEP had hosted a joint event with the European Commission to launch its Global Plastics Platform. Those events were a testament to the great global awareness of the plastics problem and to the strong commitment in all parts of the world to tackling plastics pollution.

57. The circular economy could only work if implemented at a global level because of closely interlinked global economic supply and value chains. Therefore, the European Union was working very closely with its partners. It had concluded a memorandum of understanding with China for close cooperation on the circular economy and organized the "International Forum on Circular Economy: The Production of the Future" with Latin American partners at a United Nations Industrial Development Organization event in Peru. South Africa had also been collaborating closely with the European Union on the circular economy.

58. The presence of a representative of the European Circular Economy Stakeholder Platform during the joint meeting of the Committee and the Economic and Social Council had been very much appreciated. That Platform was a hub for the development of ideas that could then be shared with stakeholders in other parts of the world, not just within the European Union.

59. In conclusion, she stressed the importance of assistance provided to developing countries at all levels for circular economy projects, such as the European Union SWITCH to Green programme supporting the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns. Investments were also being promoted through the European Union External Investment Plan to enable circular economy projects to access public funding, and then leverage private financing through that Plan to truly encourage project proposals with a circular economy component. There was great growth potential for innovative companies, from both developed and developing countries; more direct business-to-business dialogues must be fostered between them. The European Union regularly organized such events with various partners all over the world.

60. **Ms. El Hilali** (Morocco) said that the Sustainable Development Goals could not be implemented under the current linear economy model. Convinced that the transition to the circular economy was imperative, Morocco had adopted a proactive approach. In 2016, it had begun prohibiting the import, export, marketing and use of plastic bags for packaging. The Government was also subsidizing companies whose activities were directly concerned by plastic production to ease the transition to more sustainable processes.

61. The 2030 Agenda provided a comprehensive framework for achieving that transition, and the 2019 high-level political forum would focus on goals that would be advanced by the substantive advantages of the circular economy model. In her delegation's view, municipalities and local authorities were particularly relevant. Some had already included that approach in their business models and local governance. However, to succeed, a sociological change in consumerism was required. Traditional production schemes had been very circular and inclusive by nature; artisanal handmade crafts, foods and ornaments were all examples of ancestral cultural heritage, and yet were very sustainable, circular and eco-friendly. It was time for a return to such activities. The circular economy could only be a concrete tool to achieve the 2030 Agenda if individuals and smaller communities were fully involved and sensitized to the process.

62. In conclusion, she said that while Governments could help design platforms and policies in harmony with the 2030 Agenda, the private sector and small and medium-sized enterprises were key players in product design and the shift to the circular economy. Their empowerment and that of youth would spur investment in those models. Education, research and vocational training would be the starting points.

63. Companies taking innovative action to implement circular economy initiatives should have access to credit

on preferential terms. Morocco was active in that regard and had much to learn from other countries, especially those in the global South, which were championing those models.

64. **Ms. Lakatos** (President, Ernest Lupan Institute for Research in Circular Economy and Environment) said that some of the best practices to which she had referred could be applied on a small scale in Africa. Nevertheless, owing to their elevated cost, applying them might prove difficult in some countries.

65. **Mr. Anukam** (Director General, National Environmental Standards and Regulations Enforcement Agency, Nigeria) said that more needed to be done to raise the awareness of producers and consumers. Large companies should lead by example but some had shown little inclination to do so thus far. It was encouraging, however, to see that emerging businesses were interested in environmental protection and that the idea of the circular economy was attracting attention.

66. **Mr. de Cuba** (Founder, Circular Economy Platform of the Americas and Circular Economy Forum of the Americas) urged a shift in thinking from resource efficiency to resource effectiveness. Instead of making a plastic bottle thinner, perhaps the way in which goods were packaged should be rethought. Until the United Nations settled on a common definition of the circular economy, efforts to promote it would remain piecemeal.

Panel Discussion on Theme 2: "Partnerships for implementation of the circular economy"

67. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director, Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance), moderator, invited the panellists to make their presentations.

68. **Mr. Lemmens** (Global Director and Global Advisory Services Leader, Arup), panellist, accompanying his statement with a digital slide presentation, said that the concept of the circular economy could become a lasting paradigm for a restorative, industrial economy. The challenge was to unlock that potential in tangible applications. Arup was a pioneering global company committed to adapting the building industry to the precepts of the circular economy in four key areas: cities, energy, transport and water.

69. It was estimated that nearly 70 per cent of the world's population would be living in cities by 2050. Making them sustainable required completely rethinking urban living. Simply recycling was not enough. Arup was designing new cities and greenfield developments as circular loops in which the waste produced in one location could then be used elsewhere. Some 40 per cent of waste was generated by the construction industry, which was fragmented and required urgent structural change, including integrated supply chains and joint approaches based on shared gains and incentives. Integrating once separate systems would reduce the consumption of resources.

70. Given the scale and complexity of the endeavour, transformation to a truly circular economy would take generations. Many hurdles stood in the way of that transformation in the developed and developing world. Circular economy solutions had to become more affordable for business, and regulations would have to be put in place to create push and pull mechanisms. Industry players must be mobilized and partnerships set up across the public and private sectors. The circular economy was a mindset; it was about rethinking everything that people did. The mantra of "take, make and dispose" must be abandoned. In that respect, the memorandum of understanding on circular economy cooperation signed recently by China and the European Union was an encouraging sign.

71. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director, Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance) said that it would be interesting to know what Arup asked of its developers and project managers and what was being done to bring the company's initiatives to the attention of the public. He cited cases of corporations doing inspiring work on sustainable development that went unnoticed by consumers of their products. The failure to publicize the work directly among their customers was a lost opportunity to raise awareness.

72. **Mr. Lemmens** (Global Director and Global Advisory Services Leader, Arup) said that all parties in the supply chain were encouraged to think about the process of developing a city or asset as a whole. One question could be how to construct a building that 30 years later would leave no resource footprint. The steel industry provided another example: although 90 per cent of steel was recycled, the total amount produced continued to increase. Rare elements contained in the steel were irretrievably lost in the process. The point was to avoid that loss. Perhaps the answer lay in producing lower quality steel with smarter technology.

73. **Ms. Daly** (Executive Director, Center for the Circular Economy, Closed Loop Partners), panellist, accompanying her statement with a digital slide presentation, said that partnerships across industries, cities and countries were critical for economic transformation. The current period of exponential change in the way people worked, lived and communicated presented challenges and an opportunity to address the most dysfunctional aspects of the linear economic system and disrupt "business as usual" with

innovative approaches. Rapid population growth, increasing resource constraints and urbanization made it urgent to rethink the current "take, make, waste" system. Traditional growth models had been outstripped by the pace of growth and technological change. Billions of dollars were spent on landfill sites for waste that was itself worth billions of dollars.

74. In the United States of America, the transition to the circular economy would be driven by the private sector rather than national regulation. Businesses and investors were beginning to recognize the need to take into account external factors in their risk analysis, such as supply chain disruption, a shift from ownership to leasing and the resulting impact on sales and the effects of regional policymaking. An example of the latter was the proposal in the European Union to ban single-use plastics and require producers to bear some of the cost of waste management. Such trends were giving rise to new business models.

75. In the United States, greater public awareness of the fact that waste did not simply disappear was needed to generate consumer and electoral support for the transition to the circular economy. That was especially so in the absence of national regulations or funding. Positive signs included greater shareholder activism on issues such as single-use plastics, growing consumer interest in innovative models for borrowing rather than owning, and increased focus on sustainability in sectors such as the fashion industry.

76. An equitable and inclusive economy could be envisaged, in which circular business approaches created new high- and low-technology jobs. The new economy would require precompetitive collaboration between businesses that could create value which outweighed risks. For products and materials to retain their value at every stage of their life cycle, they must be aligned within infrastructure built to manage their recovery and reuse. For example, when businesses worked together to ensure access to post-consumer feedstock, they could capture value for their own brand while fostering change in systems throughout the value chain.

77. The infrastructure required stable flows of materials and profitable market demand. The increased scale resulting from a unified flow of materials would drive down costs and thereby increase the profitability of precompetitive partnerships. Joint investment by major consumer brands in circular solutions would leave each of them better placed to achieve their individual goals. Cities and states also stood to benefit, as the "take, make, waste" system cost them dearly.

78. Increasingly, goods such as furniture, which in the past had been seen as durable, were regarded as disposable. The authorities of New York City spent $60 million a year sending textiles, most of which were still useable, to landfill sites. Indeed, articles of clothing were worn, on average, only seven times before being discarded. Novel approaches to textile reuse and advanced chemical recycling could generate profits rather than costs to the taxpayer. One answer to social media pressure on young people not to wear the same articles of clothing twice was to share or rent apparel.

79. Such innovative business models and new technology represented investment opportunities. By taking full advantage of currently untapped resources, systems could be changed without sacrificing economic gain.

80. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director, Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance) noted that the city of San Francisco had a landfill-diversion rate of between 80 and 85 per cent and asked what impact the decision by China to ban the import of waste had had on the United States.

81. **Ms. Daly** (Executive Director, Center for the Circular Economy, Closed Loop Partners) said that the ban would stimulate innovation. Many companies in the United States were already using cutting edge technology for clean recycling and they would benefit from the ban. Others would have to catch up. Aside from hefty investment in such facilities and more consumer education, municipalities must raise standards on the collection of recyclable material.

82. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director, Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance) said that, where possible, consumers should opt for organic fair-trade goods.

83. **Ms. Bajaj** (Advisor, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry), panellist, accompanying her statement with a digital slide presentation, said that people in India frequently asserted that the economy in that country had always been circular. Others feared the complexity of the issue and the potentially high cost of investment in infrastructure that the circular economy would entail. The Federation was working to spread awareness of the concept and, from 2019, it planned to present awards to companies adopting circular models. By some calculations, moving to a circular economy could add $40 billion to the Indian economy by 2050. That potential for generating wealth was attractive to business. Indeed, the aim of the circular economy was to generate wealth without waste. No one wished to return to an austere way of life. For broad awareness-

raising on the circular economy to be successful, the language employed to describe it must be free of jargon.

84. The circular economy was viewed in a variety of ways. For some, it meant restoring and regenerating natural capital, while for others the emphasis was on efficiency and reduced pressure on virgin resources. In India, the lack of waste disposal infrastructure posed particular challenges. In the traditional economy, recycling had been the norm, but the use of plastics had led to the generation of enormous quantities of waste. Where waste was unavoidable even in the circular economy, efforts should be concentrated on ensuring that it was not harmful. Western countries currently led the way in terms of best practices but the Federation's priority was to identify suitable models for India. By studying value chains from a business perspective and the life cycle of products through the production, consumption and disposal stages, it was possible to identify key areas requiring change and possible solutions, the trade-offs of which must be weighed up carefully.

85. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director, Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance) noted the ethos of living simply that prevailed in Amish and Mennonite communities in the United States and emphasized the importance of avoiding the use of jargon in campaigns to raise awareness about the circular economy among policymakers and the general public. He also asked how businesses in India were being encouraged to move to the circular economy.

86. **Ms. Bajaj** (Advisor, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry) said that the Federation conveyed the concept to companies through seminars and conferences. For instance, construction companies were being encouraged to view new buildings simultaneously as a means of storing building materials for reuse in the future. In the long term, awareness of the concept should be spread through the education system. Given the costs involved, the transition to the circular economy would take time.

87. **Mr. Terva** (Finland) asked whether efforts to move towards a circular economy should be consumer-driven or rely on government regulation.

88. **Mr. Engels** (Netherlands), noting that approaches to waste disposal in Western countries were unsustainable, said that he would like to know more about how partnerships between developed and developing countries might contribute to the transition to a circular economy. He also asked what role the United Nations might play in that regard.

89. **Ms. Emet** (Nigeria) said that developing countries could not deal with waste disposal in the way developed countries did. Quality standards for the production of consumer goods ought to be standardized throughout the world. The difficulty, however, lay in how to enforce such standards in developing countries.

90. **Mr. Varganov** (Russian Federation) agreed that moving to a circular economy was imperative for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and said that a project had been launched in his country to clear up waste. An electronic environmental control system was being developed to prevent the creation of illegal city dumps. Many businesses had also begun to introduce the latest technology to improve their production methods. Changes in legislation meant that producers were increasingly being held responsible for recycling packaging and obsolete goods. In a similar vein, consumers would have to collect packaging and related materials for recycling. Partial refunds to consumers for the return of such materials would provide an incentive. While the Russian Federation supported the ongoing dialogue on the circular economy in forums such as the European Union, it was important to bear in mind the level of development of individual countries and their socioeconomic capacity to make such a transition.

91. **Mr. Lu** Yuhui (China), noting that the technology required for production in the circular economy was costly, said that China had nonetheless adopted regulations in line with the concept in 2008. The idea of green development was crucial. China recycled its own waste but did not have the capacity to deal with that of other countries. The decision by his Government to ban the import of waste was a key environmental measure. Ways must be found to stop the export by some countries of solid waste to developing countries, which could not process it.

92. **Mr. Sinha** (India), noting the merits of traditional, and thus sustainable, ways of life, said that single-use plastics would be banned in his country by 2022. The authorities were also working to remove plastic from the sea along its 7,500 km coastline. The apparent need for high technology to bring about the circular economy raised the critical question of technology transfer to countries unable to make the transition on their own.

93. **Ms. Bajaj** (Advisor, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry) said that a lack of public awareness made a consumer-driven transition to the circular economy unlikely in countries like India. With regard to the export and smuggling of waste, there was a need for caution in seeing the circular economy merely as a means of prolonging the usable life of

products by shunting them from wealthier to poorer countries. Such an approach could lead to the poorest countries becoming the dumping grounds for the world's waste.

94. **Mr. Lemmens** (Global Director and Global Advisory Services Leader, Arup) said that the language used to promote the circular economy should be tailored to different audiences. Young people were more concerned about mobility than car ownership. In developing countries where building materials were scarce, for instance, a positive case could be made for employing non-traditional materials. Today, housing could be built using natural fibres and even resins. Framing the arguments in favour of the circular economy positively would lead consumers to buy its products. In addition to encouraging business-to-business dialogue, there was a need to settle on suitable language for business-to-consumer dialogue. In addition to competition, mutually beneficial collaboration in business should be encouraged. Government had an important role to play in that respect. The possibilities afforded by open source technology management should also be examined. At the international level, China and the European Union had much to learn from one another. In short, finding incentives for all stakeholders would power the transition to the circular economy.

95. **Ms. Daly** (Executive Director, Center for the Circular Economy, Closed Loop Partners) said that the question of how to promote the circular economy was not simply a matter of government regulation or consumer education. As it was, consumers were unaware of the true price of certain goods. The cost of landfill sites, for instance, should be factored in and shared between producers and consumers. Only a small percentage of items donated to stores selling second-hand clothes was sold. The bulk ended up in landfill sites or was shipped abroad, which on occasion had an unintended adverse impact on local fabric producers in developing countries.

96. **Mr. Shank** (Communications Director, Carbon Neutral Cities Alliance) suggested that all the participants in the current meeting might wish to examine changes they could make in their daily lives and consumption patterns.

Conclusion of the joint meeting

Closing remarks

97. **Mr. Ahmad** (Director a.i., United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), New York Office) said that natural resources were currently being consumed at thrice the rate of consumption in the 1970s. Moreover, more than half of those resources ended up as waste and emissions, while only 10 per cent was recycled. He agreed that it might be advantageous to establish a common definition of the circular economy. However, with the integration of the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in the 2030 Agenda, a new universal architecture was already being put in place. Some sectors were showing the way: in the construction industry in Kenya, for example, all material recovered after the demolition of buildings was reused.

98. Creating the conditions conducive to the circular economy would require policy action at the global, regional and national levels. Its adoption in one country would affect others and have an impact on the entire value chain, by opening international markets for resource-efficient goods and services, facilitating processing, encouraging more efficient recycling and driving foreign investment and innovation. Sustainable Development Goal 12 was especially pertinent to the concept of the circular economy. The complexity of that transition could also be addressed by effectively implementing international agreements that were already in place. Partnerships would be equally critical for the move to a green economy.

99. **Mr. Liu** Zhenmin (Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs) said that a global shift to the circular economy could accelerate the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. Care should be exercised in determining the mix of government-, consumer- and private sector-driven approaches to attain the ecological benefits and cost savings expected. The kind of initiatives examined during the panel discussions needed to be scaled up for maximum impact. A shift in thinking away from the linear economy was taking place not only in the private sector, but also increasingly in government, civil society and academic circles.

100. Discussion of the circular economy could not be more opportune. The combination of population growth, rapid urbanization and economic development would increase the global generation of waste by 70 per cent in the coming 30 years. More than 2 billion tons a year of municipal solid waste were now being produced. That figure was projected to rise to 3.4 billion tons by 2050. Action to halt that trend was required urgently. Innovation and technology must be harnessed to guide change, which could only be realized through partnership between all sectors.

Closing statements

101. **Ms. King** (Co-Chair) said that successfully moving to the circular economy would require a change

in global mindsets; it must be seen that a healthy environment was also a source of growth, jobs and a chance to develop new skills. The potential benefits were increasingly being recognized around the world. She pledged personally to live more simply, to use and reuse.

102. **Mr. Skinner-Klée Arenales** (Co-Chair) seconded the pledge made by Ms. King, saying that the panel discussions had provided much food for thought. The harsh reality was that, in a globalized world, everyone should use less and reuse everything. Every human activity had a contaminating effect. In the face of rapid population and urban growth, humanity must learn to conserve natural resources and live more modestly. Human ingenuity and innovation, complemented by collaboration between industries, countries and regions, would be essential to meeting the challenges that lay ahead. That meant not pandering to vested interests. Subsidies, especially in farming, led to market distortions, inefficiency and enormous waste. The most sensitive organ of the human body appeared still to be the pocket. That had to change.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.